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MAX HAVELAAR



(D.H. Lawrence
Intro.)

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MAX HAVELAAR

By Multatuli

MAX HAVELAAR

or

THE COFFEE SALES OF THE
NETHERLANDS TRADING
COMPANY

BY *MULTATULI* (1860)

Translated from the Dutch by

W. SIEBENHAAR

With an Introduction by

D. H. LAWRENCE



NEW YORK & LONDON
ALFRED · A · KNOPF

1927

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INTRODUCTION

By D. H. LAWRENCE

MAX HAVELAAR was first published in Holland, nearly seventy years ago, and it created a *furor*. In Germany it was the book of the moment, even in England it had a liberal vogue. And to this day it remains vaguely in the minds of foreigners as the one Dutch classic.

I say vaguely, because many well-read people know nothing about it. Mr. Bernard Shaw, for example, confessed that he had never heard of it. Which is curious, considering the esteem in which it was held by men whom we might call the pre-Fabians, both in England and in America, sixty years ago.

But then *Max Havelaar*, when it appeared, was hailed as a book with a purpose. And the Anglo-Saxon mind loves to hail such books. They are so obviously in the right. The Anglo-Saxon mind also loves to forget completely, in a very short time, any book with a purpose. It is a bore, with its insistency.

So we have forgotten, with our usual completeness, all about *Max Havelaar* and about Multatuli, its author. Even the pseudonym, Multatuli (Latin for: I suffered much, or: I endured much), is to us irritating as it was exciting to our grandfathers. We don't care for poor but noble characters who are aware that they have suffered much. There is too much self-awareness.

On the surface, *Max Havelaar* is a tract or a pamphlet very much in the same line as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Instead of "pity the poor Negro slave" we have "pity the poor oppressed Javanese"; with the same urgent appeal for legislation, for the government to do something about it. Well, the government did something about Negro slaves, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fell out of date. The Nether-

lands government is also said to have done something in Java, for the poor Javanese, on the strength of Multatuli's book. So that *Max Havelaar* became a back number.

So far so good. If by writing tract-novels you can move governments to improve matters, then write tract-novels by all means. If the government, however, plays up, and does its bit, then the tract-novel has served its purpose, and descends from the stage like a political orator who has made his point.

This is all in the course of nature. And because this is the course of nature, many educated Hollanders to-day become impatient when they hear educated Germans or English or Americans referring to *Max Havelaar* as "the one Dutch classic." So Americans would feel if they heard *Uncle Tom's Cabin* referred to as "the one American classic." *Uncle Tom* is a back number in the English-speaking world, and *Max Havelaar* is, to the Dutch-speaking world, another.

If you ask a Hollander for a *really* good Dutch novelist he refers you to the man who wrote: *Old People and Things That Pass* (Louis Couperus) — or else to somebody you know nothing about.

As regards the Dutch somebody I know nothing about, I am speechless. But as regards *Old People and Things That Pass*, I still think *Max Havelaar* a far more real book. And since *Old People* etc. is quite a good contemporary novel, one needs to find out why *Max Havelaar* is better.

I have not tried to read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* since I was a boy, and wept. I will try again, when I come across a copy. But I am afraid it will pall. I know I shan't weep.

Then why doesn't *Max Havelaar* pall? Why can one still read every word of it? As far as composition goes, it is the greatest mess possible. How the reviewers of to-day would tear it across and throw it in the w. p. b.! But the reviewers of to-day, like the clergy, feel that they must justify God to man, and when they find they can't do it, when the book or the Almighty seems really unjustifiable, in the sight of common men, they apply the w. p. b.

It is surely the mistake of modern criticism, to conceive the public, the man-in-the-street, as the real god, who must be served and flattered by every book that appears, even if it were the Bible. To my thinking, the critic, like a good beadle, should rap the public on the knuckles and make it attend during divine service. And any good book is divine service.

The critic, having dated *Max Havelaar* a back number, hits him on the head if he dares look up, and says: Down! Revere the awesome modernity of the holy public!

I say: Not at all! The thing in *Max* that the public once loved, the tract, is really a back number. But there is so very little of the tract, actually, and what there is, the author has retracted so comically, as he went, that the reader can grin as he goes.

It was a stroke of cunning journalism on Multatuli's part (Dostoevsky also made such strokes of cunning journalism) to put his book through on its face value as a tract. What Multatuli really wanted was to get his book over. He wanted to be heard. He wanted to be read. *I want to be heard. I will be heard!* he vociferates on the last pages. He himself must have laughed in his sleeve as he vociferated. But the public gaped and fell for it.

He was the passionate missionary for the poor Javanese! Because he knew missionaries were, and are, listened to! And the Javanese were a good stick with which to beat the dog. The successful public being the dog. Which dog he longed to beat! To give it the trouncing of its life!

He did it, in missionary guise, in *Max Havelaar*. The book isn't really a tract, it is a satire. Multatuli isn't really a preacher, he's a satirical humourist. Straight on in the life of Jean Paul Richter the same bitter, almost mad-dog aversion from humanity that appeared in Jean Paul, appears again in Multatuli, as it appears in the later Mark Twain. Dostoevsky was somewhat the same, but in him the missionary had swallowed the mad dog of revulsion, so that the howls of derision are all ventriloquistic undertone.

Max Havelaar isn't a tract or a pamphlet, it is a satire. The

satire on the Dutch bourgeois, in *Drystubble*, is final. The coffee-broker is reduced to his ultimate nothingness, in pure humour. It is the reduction of the prosperous business man in America and England to-day, just the same, essentially the same: and it is a death-stroke.

Similarly, the Java part of the book is a satire on colonial administration, and on government altogether. It is quite direct and straightforward satire, so it is wholesome. Multatuli never quite falls down the fathomless well of his own revulsion, as Dostoevsky did, to become a lily-mouthed missionary rumbling with ventral howls of derision and dementia. At his worst, Multatuli is irritatingly sentimental, harping on pity when he is inspired by hate. Maybe he deceives himself. But never for long.

His sympathy with the Javanese is also genuine enough; there was a man in him whose bowels of compassion were moved. Whereas a great nervous genius like Dostoevsky never felt a moment of real physical sympathy in his life. But with Multatuli, the sympathy for the Javanese is rather an excuse for hating the Dutch authorities still further. It is the sympathy of a man preoccupied with other feelings.

We see this in the famous idyll of *Saïdyah* and *Adinda*, once the most beloved and most quoted part of the book. We see how it bored the author to write it, after the first few pages. He *tells* us it bored him. It bored him to write sympathetically. He was by nature a satirical humourist, and it was far more exciting for him to be attacking the Dutch officials than sympathizing with the Javanese.

This is again obvious in his partiality for the old Native Prince, the Regent. It is obvious that all the *actual* oppression of the poor Javanese came from the Javanese themselves, the native princes. It isn't the Dutch officials who steal *Saïdyah's* buffalo: it is the princely Javanese. The oppression has been going on, *Havelaar* himself says it, *since the beginning of time*. Not since the coming of the Dutch. Indeed, it is the oriental idea that the prince shall

oppress his humble subjects. So why blame the Dutch officials so absolutely? Why not take the old native Regent by the beard?

But no! Multatuli, Max Havelaar, swims with pity for the poor and oppressed, but only because he hates the powers-that-be so intensely. He doesn't hate the powers because he loves the oppressed. The boot is on the other leg. The chick of pity comes out of the egg of hate. It is perhaps always so, with pity. But here we have to distinguish compassion from pity.

Surely, when Saïdyah sets off into the world, or is defended by the buffalo, it is compassion Multatuli feels for him, not pity. But the end is pity only.

The bird of hate hatches the chick of pity. The great dynamic force in Multatuli is as it was, really, in Jean Paul and in Swift and Gogol and in Mark Twain, hate, a passionate, honourable hate. It is honourable to hate Drystubble, and Multatuli hated him. It is honourable to hate cowardly officialdom, and Multatuli hated that. Sometimes, it is even honourable, and necessary, to hate society, as Swift did, or to hate mankind altogether, as often Voltaire did.

For man tends to deteriorate into that which Drystubble was, and the Governor-General and Slimering, something hateful, which must be destroyed. Then in comes Multatuli, like Jack and the Beanstalk, to fight the giant.

And when Jack fights the giant, he *must* have recourse to a trick. David thought of a sling and stone. Multatuli took a sort of missionary disguise. The gross public accepted the disguise, and David's stone went home. *À la guerre comme à la guerre.*

When there are no more Drystubbles, no more Governor-Generals or Slimerings, then *Max Havelaar* will be out of date. The book is a pill rather than a comfit. The jam of pity was put on to get the pill down. Our fathers and grandfathers licked the jam off. We can still go on taking the pill, for the social constipation is as bad as ever.



POLICE SERGEANT. Your Honour, this is the man who murdered Barbara.

JUDGE. That man must hang. How did he manage it?

POLICE SERGEANT. He cut her up into small bits, and pickled her.

JUDGE. That was very wrong of him. He must be hanged.

LOTHARIO. Your Honour, I have not murdered Barbara. I have fed and clothed and looked after her. I have witnesses who will state that I am a good man, and not a murderer.

JUDGE. Man, you will be hanged. You aggravate your crime by conceit. It is unseemly in a person who is . . . charged with something, to consider himself a good man.

LOTHARIO. But, your Honour, there are witnesses who will confirm it. And as I am charged with murder . . .

JUDGE. You must hang! You have cut Barbara into pieces, pickled her, and are self-satisfied . . . three capital offences. Who are *you*, my good woman?

"GOOD WOMAN." I am Barbara.

LOTHARIO. Thank God! You see, your Honour, that I have not murdered her.

JUDGE. H'm . . . yes . . . perhaps! But what about the pickling?


BARBARA. No, your Honour, he has not pickled me. He has on the contrary been most kind to me. He is a noble man!

LOTHARIO. You hear, your Honour, she says I am a good man.

JUDGE. H'm! . . . the *third* charge remains. Sergeant, take the accused away, he must hang. He is guilty of conceit. Recorder, quote in the premises the jurisprudence of Lessing's patriarch.

(Unpublished Drama)

MAX HAVELAAR



CHAPTER I

I AM a coffee-broker, and live at 37, Laurier Canal. I am not in the habit of writing novels, or things of that kind, and I have, therefore, been a long time making up my mind to buy two extra reams of paper and start on the work that you, dear reader, have just taken up, and that you must read if you are a coffee-broker, or if you are anything else. Not only have I never written anything that resembled a novel, I do not even like reading things of that sort, as I am a business man. For years I have asked myself, what is the use of them, and I am amazed at the impudence with which a poet or story-teller dares try to stuff you with crammers about events that never took place, and, more often than not, could not take place. If in *my* line — I am a coffee-broker and live at 37, Laurier Canal — I furnished particulars to a principal (a principal is a man who sells coffee) which contained but a small part of the untruths that are the main body of poems and novels, he would at once transfer his business to Busselinck & Waterman. They are coffee-brokers also, but you need not know their address. I, therefore, take very good care not to write novels or furnish other untruthful statements. And I may say that I have always noticed that people who mix themselves up in such business usually come to a bad end. I am forty-three years of age, I have been on the Exchange for twenty years, and I can therefore present my credentials, if a man of experience is required. I have seen a mighty lot of firms go down! And usually, on thinking over the causes, I came to the conclusion that they lay in the wrong start given to most of them in their youth.

I only say: *truth* and *common sense*, and I stick to it. Naturally I make an exception on behalf of the *Holy Word*. The error starts

as early as Van Alphen,¹ who, in his poems given us to read as children, starts with the first line about those "sweet young creatures." What the deuce could move that old gentleman to pass himself off as a worshipper of my little sister Gertrude, who had sore eyes, or of my brother Gerard, who was always fiddling with his nose? And yet he says he "sang those little poems urged by love." I often thought as a child, "My good man, I should like to meet you, and if you should refuse me the marbles I should ask you for, or else my full name in pastry letters — I am called Batavus — I should take you to be a liar." But I have never seen Van Alphen. He was dead already, I believe, when he told us that my father was my best friend — I preferred Paulie Winsor, who lived next to us in the Batavier-street — and that "my little dog" was so "grateful." We did not keep dogs, because they are so dirty.

Nothing but lies! And so the course of education goes on. The new little sister has come from the greengrocer in a large cabbage. All the Dutch are brave and generous. The Romans were glad that the Batavians allowed them to live. The Bey of Tunis used to get colic when he heard the flutter of the Dutch flag. The Duke of Alva was a monster. The low tide of 1672 lasted a little longer than usual, for the sole purpose of protecting Holland. Lies! Holland remained Holland for the simple reason that our old people looked after their business, and because they had the true Faith. That is the point!

And a little later again there are still further lies. A girl is an angel. He that first discovered this, never had any sisters. Love is bliss. One takes flight, with some object or other, to the ends of the earth. The earth has no ends, and also that love is nonsense. No one can say that I do not live decently with my wife — she is a daughter of Last & Co., coffee-brokers — no one can say anything about our marriage. I am a member of "Artis."² She has a

¹ A Dutch writer of childish verses for children, early in the last century.

² A fashionable family club in Amsterdam, combined with the Zoological Gardens.

shawl that cost ninety-two guilders, and yet between us there has never been any talk of such a silly love which at all costs wanted to live at the end of the world. When we were married, we made a trip to The Hague — there she bought flannel, of which I am still wearing undervests — and, further than this, love never drove us into the world. Therefore, it's all silliness and lies!

And would you think, then, that *my* marriage must be less happy than that of people who for love go into consumption, or tear their hair out by the roots? Or would you imagine that my household is one atom less well regulated than it would be if seventeen years ago I had told my sweetheart in *verses* that I wanted to marry her? Nonsense! Yet I might have done so just as well as anyone else, for versifying is a trade, certainly less difficult than turning ivory. Why else are lozenges with rhymed mottoes so cheap? — Frits says: “caramels,” I don't know why. — And just ask the price of a set of billiard-balls!

I have nothing against verses in themselves. If one wishes to make the words fall into line, all right! But don't say anything that is not true. “*The raindrops pour, the clock strikes four.*” This may pass, if the rain really *does* pour, and it *is* four. But if it should be a quarter to three, I, who do not place my words in line, can say: “*The raindrops pour, and it is a quarter to three.*” But the versifier is bound to the hour of four by the downpour of the first line. For him it must absolutely be *four* o'clock, or there may be no pouring rain. Even a *quarter to four* is forbidden by the metre. So then he sets about perverting the truth! Either the weather must be changed, or the time. And so one of them must be a lie.

And it is not only those verses that lure the young to untruth. Just go to the theatre and listen to the lies that are there served up. The hero of the piece is pulled out of the water by a man who is on the verge of bankruptcy. For this he gives him half his fortune. Such a thing can't be true. When recently on the Prince's Canal my hat blew into the water — Frits says “was blown” — I gave the man who brought it back to me twopence, and he was satisfied.

Now I know perfectly well that I should have had to give a little more if he had pulled out my person, but certainly not half my money. For is it not obvious that in this way one would only have to fall into the water twice to become a pauper? And the worst of such shows on the stage is that the public gets so accustomed to all these untruths, that they admire and applaud them. I should just like to throw the whole pit into the water, to see whether any of them had been in earnest about that applause. I, who like truth, give warning to everyone that, for fishing out my person, I will not pay so much salvage money. Those who are not satisfied with less, may leave me where I am. Only on a Sunday I should be prepared to give a little more, as then I wear my chased gold watch-chain and frock coat.

Yes, that same stage corrupts many, more even than do the novels. It is so spectacular! With just a little tinsel and paper-lace, everything there looks so very alluring. For children, I mean, and for people who are not in business. Even when these actor-people seek to represent poverty, their presentation is always false. A girl whose father has become a bankrupt works to keep the family. All right. There you see her on her chair sewing, knitting, or embroidering. But now you just count the stitches she makes during the whole Act. She talks, she sighs, she runs to the window, but never a stroke of work. The family that can subsist on this labour requires very little. This kind of girl is, of course, the heroine. She has thrown a few seducers down the stairs, she keeps crying: "O, my mother, O, my mother!" and therefore represents virtue. What kind of virtue is that, which takes a whole year to make a pair of woollen stockings? Does not all this inculcate false conceptions of virtue, and of "*working for a living*"? All silliness and lies!

Then her first lover — formerly a copying clerk, but now rolling in riches — suddenly returns, and marries her. More lies. A man with money does not marry a girl out of a firm that has failed. And if you think that on the stage this may pass as an exception, still my remark stands, that one perverts the sense of truth in the people,

who take the exception as the rule, and that one saps public morality be accustoming them to applaud on the *stage* what, in the *world*, every respectable broker or merchant considers the most ridiculous lunacy. When *I* was married, there were thirteen of us in the office of my father-in-law, — Last & Co. — and there was plenty doing!

And still further lies on the stage. When the hero with his stiff stage-step goes off to save his oppressed country, why does the double back door invariably open of its own accord? And again, how can the person who speaks in verse foresee what the other will answer, so that it will be made easy for that other to rhyme? When the general says to the princess: "*Madam, to close the gates your foes have dared,*" how does he know in advance that she will say: "*Then bravely let the trusty sword be bared*"? For just suppose that she, learning that the gates were closed, replied that in this case she would wait a while until they were opened again, or that she would come back a little later, what would become of metre and rhyme? Is it not then acting a barefaced lie, when the general looks into her face inquiringly to learn what she means to do about those closed gates? And again: suppose the good lady had been rather inclined to retire for a night's rest, instead of insisting on baring something? Nothing but lies!

And then this rewarded virtue! Oh, Oh, Oh! I have been a coffee-broker for seventeen years, Laurier Canal, No. 37 — and therefore have seen a good deal, but I always feel greatly annoyed to see the dear good truth so twisted round. Rewarded virtue? Does not that make virtue an article of trade? The world is not like this, and it's a *good* thing that it isn't. For what merit would there be in virtue if it were rewarded? Why then always this pretence of infamous lies?

Take, for instance, Lucas, our warehouseman, who already worked with the father of Last & Co. — the firm was then Last and Meyer, but the Meyers have long been out of it — he surely was a virtuous man. Never a bean was short, he went regularly to

Church, and he did not drink. When my father-in-law was at Driebergen, he looked after the house, the safe and everything. One day he received seventeen guilders too much at the Bank, and he took them back. He is now old and rheumatic, and can serve no longer. So now he has nothing, for there is much work with us, and we require young people. Well then, I consider Lucas very virtuous, but does he get rewarded? Does any prince come along to give him diamonds, or any fairy who butters his bread? Not a bit of it! He is poor and remains poor, and this is as it should be. *I* cannot help him — for we require young people, as we have so much business — but even if I *could*, what merit could he still claim if in his old age he could suddenly lead an easy life? Then every warehouseman would surely become virtuous, and everyone else too, which cannot be God's intention, as in that case no special reward would remain for the good hereafter. But on the stage they twist this round. All, all lies!

I also am virtuous, but do I ask a reward for this? When my business flourishes — and it does — when my wife and children are healthy, so that I have no bother with doctor and chemist . . . when year after year I can put by a little sum for my old age . . . when Frits grows up a smart boy, to take my place later on when I retire to Driebergen . . . then, you see, I am quite contented. But all this is a natural effect of the circumstances, and of my looking after the business. For my virtue I claim nothing.

And yet that I am virtuous is plain from my love of truth. This, after my devotion to the faith, is my strongest characteristic. And I wish, reader, you were convinced of it, as it is the excuse for my writing this book.

A second trait of mine, which dominates me as strongly as my love of truth, is a passion for my occupation. Let me state that I am a coffee-broker, Laurier Canal, No. 37. Well then, reader, it is my scrupulous love of truth, and my zeal for my business, that you must thank for the fact that these pages have been written. I will tell you how this has happened. As I am taking leave of you

for the moment — I am due on 'Change — I shall presently invite you to a second chapter. So *au revoir!*

Just wait, put it into your pocket . . . 'tis but little trouble . . . it may come in handy . . . just see, here it is: my address-card! The "Co." is myself, since the Meyers are out of it — old Last is my father-in-law.

LAST & CO.

COFFEE-BROKERS

LAURIER CANAL, NO. 37.



CHAPTER II

THINGS were dull on 'Change, but the Springsale is pretty well bound to make up for it. Don't think that there is nothing doing with us. With Busselinck & Waterman things are still duller. A strange world! One experiences a good few things, when one is on the Exchange for some twenty years. Just think! They have tried — Busselinck & Waterman — to get Ludwig Stern away from me. As I don't know whether you are acquainted with the Exchange, I must first tell you that Stern is one of the foremost firms in coffee in Hamburg, which has always been served by Last & Co. Quite accidentally I came to know it. . . . I mean the trickery of Busselinck & Waterman. They promised to drop a quarter per cent. of the rebate — they are scabs, nothing better — and now look what I have done to parry that blow. Another in my place would probably have written to Ludwig Stern that he also would drop something, and that he hoped for consideration in view of the long-time services of Last & Co. . . . I have calculated that the firm, during the past more than fifty years, has made £35,000 out of Stern. The connection dates back to the Continental System, when we smuggled colonial imports from Heligoland. Yes, it is difficult to say what things another would have written. But no, I draw the line at being a scab. I went to "Poland,"¹ ordered pen and paper, and wrote:

That the large increase of our business of late, especially owing to the many valued orders from North Germany . . .

This is the absolute truth!

¹ The "Poland Café."

. . . *that this increase necessitated an addition to our staff.*

Absolutely true! Only last night the Accountant was at his desk after eleven, to look for his spectacles.

That a special need was felt of respectable, well-brought-up young men, for the German correspondence. That certainly many German youths, already in Amsterdam, possessed the necessary qualifications, but that a self-respecting firm . . .

Absolute truth!

. . . in view of the growing frivolity and immorality among the young, of the daily increase of the number of fortune-hunters, and bearing in mind the necessity of combining reliability in conduct with reliability in the carrying out of orders . . .

I swear it is all absolute truth!

that such a firm — I mean Last & Co., coffee-brokers, Laurier Canal, No. 37 — could not be too cautious in the matter of engaging employés.

All this is the unadulterated truth, reader! You probably don't know that the young German who stood on the Exchange near pillar No. 17 has run away with the daughter of Busselinck & Waterman! And our own Mary will be thirteen next September!

. . . that I had had the honour to hear from Mr. Saffeler — Saffeler travels for Stern — that the esteemed head of the firm, Mr. Ludwig Stern, had a son, Mr. Ernest Stern, who, to perfect his commercial knowledge, was desirous of being employed for some time in a Dutch firm. That I, with a view to . . .

Here I repeated all that immorality business, and told the story of the daughter of Busselinck & Waterman. Not in order to blacken anyone . . . no, throwing dirt is entirely foreign to my habits! But . . . it can do no harm that they should know it, I should think.

. . . that with a view to this, I could wish nothing better than to see Mr. Ernest Stern in charge of the German correspondence of our firm.

Out of delicacy I avoided every allusion to an honorarium or salary. But I added:

That, if Mr. Ernest Stern would be contented to make our house — Laurier Canal, No. 37 — his home, my wife had expressed herself as prepared to look after him like a mother, and that his linen would be mended on the premises.

This is the absolute truth, for Mary darns and mends very nicely. And finally:

That in our house we served the Lord.

This he can put into his pipe, for the Sterns are Lutherans. And so I sent my letter. You will understand that old Stern cannot very well transfer his business to Busselinck & Waterman if his boy is in our office. I am dying to get his answer.

And now, reverting to my book. A short while since I happened to pass through the Kalver-street, and stopped to look at the shop of a grocer, who was busy mixing a parcel of *Java, ordinary, fine-yellow, Cheribon-type, a little broken, with sweepings*, which interested me a good deal, for I always take notice of everything. All of a sudden I spotted a gentleman who stood next door in front of a bookshop, and whom I thought I knew. He seemed to recognize me also, for our eyes kept meeting. I must confess that I was too much taken up with the sweepings to notice at once a thing which I saw afterwards, namely that he was rather shabbily dressed. Otherwise I should have left the matter alone. But all at once the thought occurred to me that he might be a traveller for a German firm, in search of a reliable broker. He certainly had a touch of the German about him, and also of the traveller. He was very fair, had blue eyes, and in his bearing and get-up there was something of the foreigner. Instead of a suitable winter coat, he had a kind of shawl

hanging over his shoulder — Frits says “Châle” : he is learning French, but I keep to our good old language — as if he had just come from a journey. I thought I was meeting a client, and gave him an address-card: *Last & Co., coffee-brokers, Laurier Canal, No. 37*. He held it up to the gaslight and said: “Thank you, but I find I am mistaken; I thought I had the pleasure of seeing an old schoolfellow; but . . . *Last?* That’s not the name.”

“Beg pardon,” said I — for I am always courteous — “I am Mr. Drystubble, Batavus Drystubble. *Last & Co.* is the firm, coffee-brokers, Laurier . . .”

“Well, Drystubble, have you forgotten me? Just look well at me.”

The more I looked at him, the more I remembered having seen him before. But strange to say, his face had the effect on me of making me smell outlandish perfumes. Don’t laugh at this, reader, you will see presently what was the cause of it. I am sure he did not carry a drop of perfume about him, and yet I smelt something agreeable, something strong, something that reminded me. . . . I had got it!

“Is it *you*,” I exclaimed, “who rescued me from the Greek?”

“Most decidedly,” he said, “that was *I*. And how are *you*?”

I told him that there were thirteen of us at the office, and that there was a lot doing in our firm. And then I asked how he was getting on, which I regretted afterwards, for he appeared to be in any but flourishing circumstances, and I am not keen on poor people, as there is usually some fault of their own at the back of it, for the Lord would not desert anyone who had served him faithfully. Had I said quite simply: “we are thirteen, and . . . well, good evening!” I should have been quit of him. But all these questions and answers made it more and more difficult — Frits says: “*ever* more difficult”; but I don’t — *more* and more difficult then, to get rid of him. On the other hand, however, I must also admit that then you would not have got this book to read, for it is the result of that meeting. I like to notice the good as well as the bad, and

those who do otherwise are discontented people, whom I cannot bear.

Yes, indeed, it was he who had rescued me from the hands of the Greek! Now don't think that I have ever been captured by pirates, or that I had a quarrel in the Levant. I have already told you that after my marriage I went with my wife to The Hague. There we saw the pictures in the Maurits-House, and bought flannel in the Veene-street. That is the only excursion our business has ever permitted me, as there is so much doing in our firm. No, it was in Amsterdam itself that, for my sake, he struck a Greek, so that the man's nose bled. For he always meddled in things that did not concern him.

It was in 1833 or 1834, I think, and it was in September, for the Amsterdam fair was on. As my people intended to make a clergyman of me, I learnt Latin. Afterwards I have often asked myself why one must understand Latin in order to say in one's own language: "God is good!" Enough, I went to the Latin school — they now say *grammar school* — and there was a fair on . . . in Amsterdam, I mean. On the Westermarket there were booths, and if you are an Amsterdammer, reader, and of about my age, you will remember that among those there was one which was distinguished for the black eyes and the long plaits of a girl who was dressed in Greek fashion. Her father was a Greek, or at least he looked like a Greek. They sold all sorts of scents.

I was just old enough to think the girl pretty, without, however, having the courage to speak to her. For that matter it would have availed me but little, for girls of eighteen look upon a boy of sixteen as a child. And in this they are quite right. Yet we, boys of "the fourth," came every evening to the Westermarket to see that girl.

Now it happened on one of these occasions that he who at this moment stood before me with his shawl was with us, although he was a couple of years younger than the others, and therefore still too childish to look at the Greek girl. But he was the top boy of

our class — for he was clever, that must be admitted — and he was fond of games, horseplay, and fighting. That's why he was with us. So as we — there were quite ten of us — stood, at a fair distance from the booth, looking at the Greek girl, and deliberated how we should manage to make her acquaintance, we decided to put together our money in order to buy something at the booth. But then the dilemma was to find the bold boy who would dare to speak to the girl. Everyone wanted to, but no one dared. We drew lots and the task fell to me. Now I fully admit that I am not fond of facing dangers. I am a husband and a father, and I look on everyone who seeks danger as a fool, and so it says in the Scriptures also. It is indeed a pleasure to me to notice how in my opinions about danger and such-like things, I have been consistent all my life, as even now I still hold exactly the same opinion about these things as I did on that evening when I stood there at the booth of the Greek, with the twelve pence we had put together in my hand. But, unfortunately, through false shame I durst not say that I durst not, and besides, I was simply forced to go forward, for my mates pushed me, and soon I stood in front of the booth.

I did not see the girl: I saw nothing! Everything seemed to turn green and yellow before my eyes. I stammered an *aoristus primus* of I know not what verb. . . .

“*Plait-il?*” she said.

I recovered a little, and continued:

“*Menin aeide thea,*” and . . . that Egypt was a gift of the Nile.

I am convinced that I should have succeeded in making her acquaintance, if at that moment one of the fellows in childish mischief had not given me such a push in the back that I collided roughly with the counter, which, to half the height of a man, shut off the front of the booth. I felt my neck gripped . . . a second grip, much lower down. . . . I floated in the air for a moment . . . and before I understood clearly what was the matter, I was inside the booth of the Greek, who told me in intelligible French

that I was a *gamin*, and that he would call the police. Now it is true that I was close to the girl, but it gave me no pleasure. I cried, I begged for mercy, for I was in terrible fear. But it was of no avail. The Greek held me by my arm, and kicked me. I looked for my mates — we had that very morning dealt a great deal with Scaevola, who put his hand into the fire, and in their Latin compositions they had considered this so *very* fine — yes, indeed! But never a one remained behind to put a hand into the fire for *me*.

So I thought. But behold: suddenly my Shawlman rushed into the booth through the back door. He was neither tall nor strong, and only about thirteen, but he was a smart and plucky little fellow. I still see his eyes flashing — they were usually dim — he gave the Greek a blow with his fist, and I was saved. Afterwards I heard that the Greek had beaten him severely, but as it is a fixed principle with me never to meddle with things that do not concern me, I immediately ran away. So I did not see it.

This then is the reason why his features reminded me so of scent, and of the way one may get into a quarrel with a Greek in Amsterdam. At subsequent fairs, when this man stood again with his booth in the Westermarket, I always sought my entertainment elsewhere.

As I am very fond of philosophical observations, I just want to say to you, reader, how wonderfully the affairs of this world hang together. If the eyes of that girl had been less black, if her plaits had been shorter, or if someone had not thrown me against that counter, you would not now be reading this book. Be thankful, therefore, that it happened thus. Believe me, everything in the world is good, just as it is, and discontented people who for ever complain are not my friends. Take for instance Busselinck & Waterman . . . but I must proceed, for my book must be finished before the Springsale.

Frankly speaking — for I like the truth — seeing this person again was not agreeable to me. I at once realized that it was not

a reliable connection. He was very pale, and when I asked him the time, he could not tell me. These are things a man notices, after being on the Exchange for some twenty years, and witnessing a good many things. It's a good many firms I've seen go down!

I thought he would turn to the right, and said I had to go to the left. But, you see, he went to the left also, and so I could not avoid getting into conversation with him. But I remembered every moment that he did not know the time, and noticed moreover that his shabby coat was buttoned right up to the chin — which is a very bad sign — so that I kept the tone of our conversation somewhat lukewarm. He told me he had been in India, that he was married, that he had children. I had nothing against it, but found nothing interesting in it. Near Kapel-lane — at no other time do I go through that lane, because it does not, it seems to me, become a respectable man — but this time I wished to turn to the right at Kapel-lane. I waited till we had nearly passed that little street, so as to make it clear that his road was straight on, and then I said very courteously . . . for I am always courteous, one never knows how perhaps one may afterwards want a man:

"I was particularly delighted to see you again, Sir — r — r! And — and — and — my best wishes! I have to go in here."

Then he looked at me very peculiarly and sighed, and suddenly got hold of a button of my coat. . . .

"Dear Drystubble," he said, "I have something to ask you."

A cold shiver went through my spine. He did not know the time, and he wanted to ask me something! I answered of course that I had no time to spare, and had to go to 'Change, although it was evening. But when one has been on the Exchange for twenty years . . . and a man wants to ask you something, without knowing the time . . .

I disengaged my button, saluted most politely — for I am always polite — and entered Kapel-lane, a thing I never do otherwise, as it is not respectable, and I place respectability above everything. I trust no one saw me.



CHAPTER III

NEXT day, when I returned from 'Change, Frits said somebody had been to see me. From the description it was the Shawlman. How had he found me? . . . well, yes, the address-card! It really made me think I would take my children away from school, for it's just a bit too much, after twenty or thirty years, to be still pursued by a schoolmate who wears a shawl instead of a coat, and who does not know the time. Also, I have forbidden Frits to go to Westermarket when there are any booths.

The day after that I received a letter together with a large packet. I will let you read the letter:

"Dear Drystubble!"

I think he might just as well have said "*Dear Mr. Drystubble,*" as I am a broker.

"I was at your house yesterday, as I wished to ask you a favour. I believe you are in affluent circumstances! . . .

That is true: there are thirteen of us in the office.

" . . . and I should like to be allowed to use your credit in order to carry out a project which is of great importance to me."

One really would think it was a question of an order for the Springsale!

"Through an unfortunate chain of circumstances I am at present somewhat in need of money."

Somewhat? He hadn't a shirt on. That's what he calls "*somewhat*"!

"I cannot give my dear wife all that is needful to make life pleasant, and the education, also, of my children is, from a financial point of view, not what I wish it to be."

To make life pleasant! Education of the children! You would think he wished to take a box at the opera for his wife, and send his children to a boarding school in Geneva. Mind you, it was late in the year, and pretty cold . . . well, he lived under the tiles, without fire! When I received that letter, I did not know this, but later on I was at his place, and to this day I feel annoyed about the silly tone of his epistle. Hang it, when a man is poor, he may as well say that he is poor! There must be poor people, that is necessary in Society, and it is God's will. If he will only not beg for alms and will trouble nobody, I have no objection whatever to his being poor; but he has no right to put all this gloss on the matter. Listen further:

"As it is my duty to provide for the needs of those belonging to me, I have decided to utilize a talent which I believe is given to me. I am a poet . . .

Pshaw! You know, reader, what I and all sensible people think about poets.

. . . "and writer. From my childhood I have expressed my emotions in verse, and also in later times I wrote down daily what passed through my soul. I imagine that among all these writings there are some articles that have a certain value, and I am looking for a publisher for these. But this is exactly the difficulty. I am unknown to the public, and publishers value a work more according to the established name of the author than according to its contents."

Just as we do coffee according to the name of the brands. Certainly! How else?

"If therefore I may assume that my work is not entirely without merit, this naturally would only be proved after publication, and the printers just as naturally ask for payment in advance for printers' wages, etc. . . .

And they are quite right.

" . . . which at present I cannot conveniently afford. As, however, I am convinced that my work would cover expenses, and would confidently pledge my word on this, I have, encouraged through our meeting the day before yesterday . . .

He calls that "encouraged" !

" . . . decided to ask you whether you would be my guarantor with the publisher for the cost of a first issue, were it only of a small volume. I leave the choice of the first attempt entirely to you. In the packet herewith forwarded you will find many manuscripts, and they will show you that I have thought much, worked much, and experienced much . . .

I have never heard that he was in business.

" . . . and if the gift of right expression is not altogether wanting in me, it will certainly not be owing to lack of impressions that I should fail to succeed.

"In anticipation of a kind reply, I sign myself your old schoolmate . . ." !

And his name was written underneath. But I do not mention it, as I am not fond of getting a man talked about.

Dear reader, you can imagine how I was taken aback, when it was suddenly suggested that I should be raised to the position of verse-broker. I feel sure that if "Shawlman" — I think I shall just give him that name — had seen me in the daytime, he would not have addressed such a request to me. For then gentility and respectability cannot be hidden. But it was in the evening, so I don't feel concerned about it. It is self-evident that I'll have noth-

ing to do with this nonsense. I should have got Frits to take the parcel back, but I did not know his address, and I heard nothing from him. I thought he might be dead, or ill, or something of the kind.

Last week it was the Rosemeyers' turn for the party which we give alternately. They are sugar people. Frits went for the first time. He is sixteen years old, and it seems to me a good thing for a young man to go out into the world. Otherwise he may only go to the Westermarket, or some such thing. The girls, before dinner, had been playing the piano and singing, and during dessert they were teasing each other about something that appeared to have taken place in the drawing-room, while we were having a game of whist, something that seemed to concern Frits. "Oh, yes, Louise," exclaimed Betsy Rosemeyer, "you *did* cry! Papa, Frits has made Louise cry!"

My wife at once said that in that case Frits should not again come to any party. She thought he had pinched Louise, or something else unseemly, and I also was just about to add a word to the point, when Louise exclaimed:

"No, no! Frits has been very nice! I wish he would do it again!"

What could it be? He had not pinched her, he had given a recitation, that was it!

Of course the lady of the house always likes to see her guests amused during dessert. It fills a void. Mrs. Rosemeyer — the Rosemeyers want to be called "*Mrs.*,"¹ as they are sugar people and own a share in a ship — Mrs. Rosemeyer guessed that what had made Louise cry would also entertain us, and asked Frits for an encore; he had turned as red as a turkey. I could not think for the world what he had given them, for I knew his repertoire to a *t*. It was: "The Wedding of the Gods," "The Books of the old Testament in Rhyme," and a passage from "The Wedding of Kama-

¹ For a married woman of the lower middle-class the title is "juffrouw," the same as for an unmarried woman.

cho," which the boys always find so amusing because there is something in it about "giglamps." What there could be in any of these to draw tears, was a puzzle to me. It is true, girls like that are easily made to cry.

"Come on, Frits! Oh, yes, Frits! Go on, Frits!" So they went on, and at last Frits began. As I do not like to keep the reader in suspense, I will just say at once that at home they had opened Shawlman's packet, and from it Frits and Mary had extracted an amount of wiseacredom and sentimentality, which afterwards brought a good deal of trouble into our home. Yet I have to admit, reader, that this book you are reading also came out of the packet, and of this fact I shall afterwards give a proper account, for it is of importance to me that I be considered as a person who loves the truth, and who looks after his business. Our firm is "Last & Co., Coffee-brokers, Laurier Canal, No. 37."

Frits then recited a thing which was all nonsense from beginning to end. It was all disconnected. A young man was writing to his mother that he had been in love, and that the girl had married someone else — I think she was quite right — but he, in spite of this, always loved his mother. Do the last few lines I have just written seem clear to you or not? Do you consider that it should have taken much longer to say it? Well, I ate some bread and cheese, then peeled two pears, and had half finished munching a third, before Frits had done with the story. But Louise again cried, and the ladies said it was very pretty. Then Frits, who seemed to think he had done something quite grand, told us that he had found the thing in the parcel of the man who wore a shawl, and I explained to the gentlemen how it had got into my house. But I said nothing about the Greek girl, as Frits was present, and I also said nothing about Kapel-lane. Everyone considered I had done the right thing in getting rid of the man. You will see presently that there were other things also in that parcel, things of a more solid nature, and of these some will go into this book, as the *Coffee-sales of the Trading Company* are connected with them . . . for I live for my trade.

The publisher asked me afterwards whether here I would not add what Frits had recited. I don't mind giving some lines from it on which I want to comment later on, provided it be understood that I personally never have anything to do with things of this kind. Lies and silliness, from beginning to end! I will only add that the story seems to have been written about 1843 in the neighbourhood of Padang, and that this is an inferior brand. I mean of coffee.

“ What is love that late *upsprang*,
To the love by God's hand planted
In the heart when life was granted,
Ere the child's first accents rang?
Ere, at mother's breast, he first
Drew, scarce from the womb delivered,
Milk of life to quench his thirst,
Light that in her fond eyes quivered? ”



CHAPTER IV

BEFORE I go any further, I must tell you that young Stern has arrived. He is a nice young fellow. He seems quick and capable, but I believe he is a dreamer. Mary is thirteen. His outfit is very neat. I have set him to work at the copying-book, so that he may get accustomed to the Dutch style. I am curious to see whether it will be long before there are orders from Ludwig Stern. Mary is going to work a pair of slippers for him . . . for young Stern, I mean. Busselinck & Waterman have got nothing for their trouble. A respectable broker does not scab, say *I!*

The day after the party at the Rosemeyers', who are sugar people, I called Frits, and told him to bring me that parcel of Shawlman's. You will please remember, reader, that in my family I strictly insist on religion and morality. Well, the evening before, just after I had peeled my first pear, I read on the face of one of the girls that there was something in that poem which was not quite as it should be. I had not listened to the thing, but I had noticed that Betsy crumbled her roll of bread, and that was enough for me. You will recognize, reader, that you are dealing with a man who knows what goes on in the world. I, therefore, got Frits to put that "fine piece" of the previous night before me, and I very soon found the line that had crumbled Betsy's roll of bread. It mentions a child at the mother's breast — that may pass — but: "scarce from the womb delivered," you see that did not seem right to me — I mean, to *mention* such a thing — nor to my wife. Mary is thirteen. In our house we don't speak of the *cabbage* or the *stork*, nor the *gooseberry-bush*; but to name the things so openly does not seem proper to me, as I am such a stickler for morality. I made Frits, who unfortunately already knew the thing "out-

wardly," as Stern calls it, promise that he would never again recite it — at least not before he is a member of "Doctrina," as no young girls are admitted there — and then I put it away in my desk; I mean the poem. But I felt that I ought to know whether there was anything else in the parcel that might give offence. So I searched and turned over the papers. I could not read it all, for there were languages in it which I did not understand; but suddenly my eye lighted on a packet of papers: "Report on coffee-growing in the Residency of Menado."

My heart leapt up within me, as I am a coffee-broker — Laurier Canal, No. 37 — and *Menado* is a good brand. So then this Shawlman, who wrote such immoral verses, had also been in coffee. This made me look at the parcel with different eyes altogether, and I found articles in it, all of which, it is true, I did not understand, but which showed a real knowledge of affairs. There were statements, quotations, calculations of figures that I could not make head or tail of, and all of it was worked out with such care and precision that, speaking frankly — for I love the truth — the idea occurred to me that Shawlman, should the third clerk at any time fail — which is quite on the cards, as he is getting old and feeble — might perfectly well take his place. It goes without saying that I should first have to obtain references as to his honesty, beliefs and respectability, for I will have no one in the office before I am assured on those points. This is a fixed principle with me, as you have seen in the case of my letter to Ludwig Stern.

I did not want to show Frits that I was in any way interested in the contents of the parcel, so I sent him away. It really made me giddy, when I took up one packet after another, and read the superscriptions. It is true, there were many poems among them, but I also found many useful things, and I was amazed at the diversity of the subjects. I must admit — for I love the truth — that I, who have always dealt in coffee, am unable to estimate the value of all these things; but even without such an estimate, the list of titles alone was quite remarkable. As I have told you the story of

the Greek, you know already that in my youth I was somewhat latinized, and, however much in correspondence I may refrain from quoting — a habit which would be most unsuitable to a broker's office — I could not help thinking, when I saw all this: "*Multa, non multum*" or: "*de omnibus aliquid, de toto nihil*."

But this was really more the result of a kind of irritation, and of a certain impulse to address all this mass of learning in front of me with a Latin phrase, than that I truly meant it. For when I looked into some of the articles a little further, I had to admit that the writer appeared to be quite equal to his task, and even that his reasonings gave evidence of being very sound.

I found studies and essays on:

Sanscrit as the mother of the Teutonic languages.

Penal law on infanticide.

The Origin of the Nobility.

The difference between the conceptions of Infinite time and Eternity.

The theory of probability.

The book of Job. (I found another thing about *Job*, but that was in verse.)

Protein in the atmosphere.

Russian politics.

The vowels.

Solitary confinement.

The theses concerning the horror vacui.

The Desirableness of the abolition of penalties for libel.

The causes of the Dutch rebellion against Spain, arising not from the desire for religious or political liberty.

The perpetuum mobile, the squaring of the circle, and the root of rootless numbers.

The gravity of light.

The retrogression of civilization since the rise of Christianity.
(What? ! !)

Icelandic Mythology.

Rousseau's "Émile."

Civil law in commerce.

Sirius as the centre of a solar system.

Import Duties as ineffectual, improperly inquisitive, unjust and immoral. (I had never heard of this.)

Verse as the oldest language. (I don't believe that.)

White ants.

The unnaturalness of Schools.

Prostitution in marriage. (This is a shameful piece of writing.)

Hydraulics in connection with rice-plantations.

The apparent preponderance of Western civilization.

Land-ownership, registration and stamp-duty.

Children's books, fables and fairy-tales. (I'll just read that, for he insists on truth.)

The middle-man in trade. (This doesn't appeal to me at all.

I believe he wants to do without brokers. However, I have put it by for the present, as there are one or two references in it which I can use for my book.)

Succession-duties, one of the best taxes.

The invention of chastity. (I don't understand this.)

Multiplication. (This title sounds quite simple, but there are a good many things in this article that I had never thought of.)

The nature of a certain kind of French wit, a consequence of the poverty of the French language. (Quite true, I should say. Wit and poverty . . . he ought to know.)

The connection between the novels of August Lafontaine and consumption. (I'll read this, for there are some books of this Lafontaine in the loft. But he says the influence doesn't show until the second generation. My grandfather didn't read.)

The power of England outside Europe.

The arbitrament of God in the middle ages, and now.

Arithmetic with the Romans.

Absence of poetry in musical composers.

Pietism, hypnotism and table-turning.

Infectious diseases.

Moorish architecture.

The force of prejudice, as evident from illnesses attributed to draught. (Have I not said that the list is most remarkable?)

German unity.

Longitude at sea. (I suppose at sea things are just as long as on the land.)

The duties of Government with regard to public forms of recreation.

Similarity between the Scottish and Frisian languages.

Prosody.

The beauty of the women of Nîmes and Arles, and an inquiry into the system of colonization of the Phœnicians.

Agrarian contracts in Java.

The power of suction in a new kind of pump.

The legitimate rights of dynasties.

National literature in the Javanese rhapsodists.

A new method of reefing.

Percussion, as applied to hand-grenades. (This article is dated 1847, i.e. before Orsini.)

The idea of honour.

The Apocrypha.

The laws of Solon, Lycurgus, Zoroaster, and Confucius.

Parental authority.

Shakespeare as an historian.

Slavery in Europe. (I don't understand what he means by this. There is a good deal more like it!)

Screw-water-mills.

The sovereign right of pardon.

The chemical components of Ceylon cinnamon.

Discipline on merchantmen.

The opium concession in Java.

Regulations as to the sale of poisons.

The cutting of the Suez Canal, and its consequences.

Payment of land-rent in kind.

Coffee-planting in Menado. (This I have already referred to.)

The partition of the Roman Empire.

The Gemüthlichkeit of the Germans.

The Scandinavian Edda.

The duty of France, to establish for herself a counterpoise to England in the Indian Archipelago. (This was written in French, I don't know why.)

Vinegar manufacture.

The homage paid to Schiller and Goethe in the German middle-class.

Man's claims to happiness.

The right of rebellion against oppression. (This was in the Javanese language. I only got to know the title afterwards.)

Ministerial responsibility.

Some points in criminal law.

The right of a people to demand that the taxes they pay shall be applied for their use. (This again was in Javanese.)

The double A and the Greek Eta.

The existence of an impersonal God in the hearts of men.
(An infamous lie!)

Style.

A constitution for the Empire of INSULIND. (I have never heard of that Empire.)

The absence of ephelecoustics in our rules of grammar.

Pedantry. (I believe this article is written with a good deal of intimate knowledge.)

Europe's debt to the Portuguese.

Forest-sounds.

Combustibility of water. (I think he must mean *aqua fortis*.)

The milk-sea. (I have never heard of it. It seems to be something in the vicinity of *Banda*.)

Seers and prophets.

Electricity as a motive power, without soft iron.

Ebb and flood of civilization.

Epidemic corruption in political households.

Privileged Trading Companies. (This contains one or two things that I require for my book.)

Etymology as an auxiliary to ethnological studies.

The bird's-nest cliffs on Java's south coast.

The place where day commences. (I don't understand this.)

Personal conceptions as a measure of responsibility in the moral world. (Absurd! He says everyone must be his own judge. Where would that lead us?)

Courtesy to women.

Verse-structure of the Hebrews.

The Century of Inventions of the Marquis of Worcester.

The fasting population of the island Rotti near Timor. (Living must be cheap there.)

Cannibalism of the Battahs, and head-hunting among the Alfurs.

Mistrust in public morality. (He wants, I believe, to abolish locksmiths. I am against this.)

"Justice" and "law."

Béranger as a philosopher. (This again I don't understand.)

The dislike of the Javanese which is found among the Malays.

The worthlessness of the teaching in so-called universities.

The loveless spirit of our ancestors, as apparent from their conceptions of God. (Again an impious piece of writing!)

The inter-relation of our senses. (It is true that when I saw him I smelt rose-oil.)

The coniform root of the coffee-tree. (This I have laid aside for my book.)

Feeling, sensitiveness, sentimentality, etc.

The confounding of mythology with religion.

Prevention of sago-spleen in the Moluccas.

The future of Dutch trade. (This, indeed, is the article that has induced me to write my book. He says there will not always be such large coffee-sales, and I live for my business.)

Genesis. (An infamous article!)

The secret societies of the Chinese.

Drawing as the natural form of writing. (He says a new-born child can draw!)

Truth in poetry. (Certainly!)

The unpopularity of rice-peeling mills in Java.

The connection between poetry and the mathematical sciences.

The Wayangs of the Chinese.

The price of Java coffee. (This I have laid aside.)

A European coinage.

Irrigation of communal lands.

The influence of the mixing of races on the mind.

Balance of trade. (In this he speaks of the fluctuations of exchange. I have laid it aside for my book.)

The persistence of Asiatic customs. (He maintains that Jesus wore a turban.)

The ideas of Malthus about the number of the population in relation to the means of sustenance.

The original population of America.

The harbour works of Batavia, Samarang, and Soerabaya.

Architecture as an expression of ideas.

The relation of European officials to the Regents of Java.
(Of this one or two things are going into my book.)

Cellar-dwellings in Amsterdam.

The power of error.

The inactivity of a Supreme Being, in view of the existence of perfect natural laws.

The salt monopoly in Java.

Worms in the sago-palm. (He says people eat those . . . bah!)

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, and the pantoons of the Javanese.

Jus primi occupantis.

The poverty of the art of painting.

The immorality of angling. (Whoever has heard of this before!)

The crimes of the Europeans outside Europe.

The weapons of the weaker animals.

Jus talionis. (Another infamous article! There was a poem in it which I know I should have considered most shameful, if I had read it right through.)

And this was by no means all! Not to speak of poems — they were there in several languages — I found a number of packets without superscription, romances in Malay, war songs in Javanese, and what not! I also found letters, many of them in languages which I did not understand. Some were to him, or rather they were only copies, but he seemed to have some object with these, for everything was signed by certain persons as: *certified to be a true copy of the original*. Furthermore I found extracts from diaries, notes and loose remarks . . . some, indeed, very loose.

I had, as I remarked before, laid some of the articles aside, as it seemed to me they might be of use in my profession, and I live for my profession. But I must admit that I was at a loss what to do with the rest. I could not return the parcel to him, as I did not know where he lived. You see, it had been opened. I could not deny that I had looked into it, and this I should certainly not have denied in any case, as I am so devoted to the truth. Also, I did not succeed in doing it up well enough not to show that it had

been opened. Besides, I must not conceal the fact that some of the articles, dealing with coffee, interested me, and that I should like to use them. I daily read some pages here and there, and I became more and more — Frits says "*ever more*," but I don't — *more* and more, I say, convinced that a man must be a coffee-broker to know *so* exactly what takes place in the world. I am convinced that the Rosemeyers, who are sugar people, have never set eyes on anything like it.

Now I was afraid that Shawlman might suddenly again appear in front of me, and that he might again have something to say to me. I began to regret that on the evening in question I had turned into Kapel-lane, and I realized that one should never leave the respectable road. He would, of course, have asked me for money, and spoken of his parcel. I might perhaps have given him something, and then, if next day he had sent me that whole pack of writing, it would have been my lawful property. I could then have separated the tares from the wheat, I should have retained the numbers that I wanted for my book, and burnt the remainder, or thrown it into the w.p.b., which now I could not do. For if he returned, I should have to give it up, and he, seeing that I was interested in one or two articles from his pen, would doubtless ask too much for them. Nothing gives the seller a greater advantage than the discovery that the buyer is in need of his wares. And a merchant who understands his profession will avoid this as much as possible.

Another idea has just occurred to me — although I have already mentioned it — which goes to prove how receptive the membership of the Exchange may leave one to human impressions. It is this. Bastians — this is the third clerk, who is getting so old and feeble — has of late scarcely been in the office twenty-five days out of thirty, and when he does turn up, he often does his work badly. As a man of probity I feel it my duty to the firm — Last & Co., as the Meyers are out of it — to see that everyone does his work, and I am not at liberty to throw away the firm's money from a

mistaken conception of pity or hypersensitiveness. Such is my principle. I'd rather give this same Bastians three guilders out of my own pocket, than go on paying him the seven hundred guilders a year which he no longer earns. I have calculated that this man has received in income, during the past thirty-four years — both from Last & Co. and from Last & Meyer, but the Meyers are out of it — the sum of nearly fifteen thousand guilders, and this, for a modest middle-class man, is not a bad little sum. There are not many in his class who possess as much as that. So he has nothing to complain of. This calculation was suggested to me by that article of Shawlman on multiplication.

This Shawlman writes a good hand, I thought. Besides, he looked shabby, and didn't know the time . . . how would it be, I thought, if I gave him Bastians's place? I should of course tell him that he must call me "Sir," but no doubt he would understand this of his own accord, for naturally a clerk cannot address his employer by his name, and so he would probably be settled for life. He might start on four or five hundred guilders — our Bastians also worked a long time before he was advanced to seven hundred guilders — and I should at the same time be doing a good action. Why, there is no reason why he shouldn't start on three hundred guilders, for as he has never been in business, he might look upon the first few years as an apprenticeship, and this would be quite reasonable, for he could not expect to place himself on a level with people who have worked much. I feel quite sure he would be satisfied with two hundred guilders. But I felt uneasy about his conduct . . . he wore a shawl, you know! And besides, I didn't know where he lived.

A couple of days after this, young Stern and Frits returned from a book-sale in "*The Arms of Berne*." I had forbidden Frits to buy anything, but Stern, who has plenty of pocket-money, came home with some rubbish. That's his affair. But Frits told me that he had seen Shawlman, who appeared to be employed at the sale. He took the books down from the shelves, and pushed them for-

ward on the long table towards the auctioneer. Frits said he looked very pale, and a gentleman who was in charge of the sale had scolded him for having dropped a couple of issues of the "*Aglaia*," which seemed to me a clumsy thing to do, for it is a charming collection of ladies' fancy work. Mary and the Rosemeyers—who are sugar people—take it in and share the expense. She tats from it . . . from the "*Aglaia*," I mean. But over this "rowing" Frits heard that he earned fifteen pence a day. "Do you think I'm going to throw away fifteen pence a day on you?" the gentleman had said. I calculated that fifteen pence a day—I think Sundays and holidays cannot count, otherwise he would have mentioned a monthly or yearly salary—that fifteen pence a day makes two hundred and twenty-five guilders a year. I am quick in my decisions—when one has been in business so long, one always knows at once what to do—and next morning early I was at Ripesucker's. That's the name of the bookseller who had held the sale. I asked for the man who had dropped the "*Aglaia*."

"He's got the sack," said Ripesucker. "He was lazy, pedantic and sickly."

I bought a small box of wafers, and at once decided to give our Bastians another chance. I could not make up my mind so to turn an old man out into the street. Severe, but, where it is permissible, kindly, this has always been my principle. Still I never neglect to learn anything that may be useful in the business, and so I asked Ripesucker where Shawlman lived. He gave me the address, and I wrote it down.

I was constantly pondering over my book, but as I love the truth, I must frankly confess that I did not know how to go about it. One thing is certain: the materials I had found in Shawlman's parcel were of importance to coffee-brokers. The only question was, how was I to set about sifting the materials and putting them together properly. Every broker knows the importance of properly sorting out the various parcels of coffee.

But . . . writing — apart from correspondence with principals — is outside my scope, and yet I felt that I ought to write, as perhaps the future of the profession may depend upon it. The information I found in Shawlman's parcels is not of a nature that would permit Last & Co. to keep its utility entirely to themselves. If it were, everyone understands that I should not take the trouble to have a book printed which Busselinck & Waterman would read also; for he who helps a rival on his way, is a fool. This is one of my firmest principles. No, I realized that there was a danger threatening which would spoil the whole coffee market, a danger that only the united efforts of all the brokers could ward off; and it is even possible that these efforts would not be equal to the task, and that also the *sugar-raffinadeurs* — Frits says refiners, but I write *raffinadeurs*; this the Rosemeyers do also, and they *are* sugar people; I know, one speaks of a *refined* scoundrel, and not a *raffinadeur* scoundrel, but that is because everyone who has to deal with scoundrels gets rid of the business as quickly as possible — that also the *raffinadeurs* then, and the indigo-traders, will have to be in it.

When in my writing I so ponder the matter, it seems to me that even the ship-owners are to some extent affected by it, and the merchant-navy . . . certainly, there is no doubt about it! And the sailmakers too, and the State Treasurer, and the guardians of the poor, and the other Ministers of State, and the pastry-cooks, and the fancy-shopkeepers, and the women, and the shipwrights, and the wholesale dealers, and the retailers, and the caretakers of houses, and the gardeners.

And — it is strange how thoughts will rise in one's mind while writing — my book also concerns the millers, and the clergy, and those who sell Holloway's pills, and the distillers, and the potters, and the people who make their living out of the Public Debt, and the pumpmakers, and the cordwainers, and the weavers, and the butchers, and the brokers' clerks, and the shareholders in the Netherlands Trading Company, and, in fact, properly speaking all others.

And the King also . . . yes, the King above all!

My book *must* go out into the world. There is nothing else for it! No matter whether Busselinck & Waterman should also read it . . . envy is not my business. At the same time, however, I say that they are schemers and scabs! Only to-day I said so to young Stern, when I proposed him in *Artis*. I don't mind in the least if he writes and tells his father.

So then only a few days ago I was quite worried about my book, and now Frits has helped me out. I didn't tell him so, for I don't approve of letting people know that one is under any obligation to them — this is one of my principles — but it is true all the same. He said Stern was such a smart youth, and that he made such progress in our language, and that he had translated German verses of Shawlman's into Dutch. You see, the world was upside down in my house; the *Dutchman* had written in German and now the *German* translated it into Dutch. If each had kept to his own language, it would have saved trouble. But, I thought, suppose I got this Stern to write my book! If I should have anything to add, I can now and then write a chapter myself. Frits also can assist. He has a list of words written with *ie*, and Mary can make a neat copy of everything. This will at the same time give the reader a guarantee against any immorality. For it must be obvious to you that no respectable broker would put anything into the hands of his daughter that was not wholly in keeping with all the rules of morality and respectability.

I, therefore, spoke to both youths about my project, and they thought it a good one. Only it seemed that Stern, who has a touch of literary knowledge — as so many Germans — wanted to have a voice in the manner of the execution of the work. This, to be candid, did not please me altogether, but as the Springsale is at hand, and I haven't yet any orders from Ludwig Stern, I didn't want to go against him too much. He said that when his breast glowed with enthusiasm for truth and beauty, no power in the world could restrain him from striking the notes which harmonized — Frits writes *harmonised*, but I don't. I pronounce it *z*, and I write it *z*

— with such feeling, and that he would rather be silent than see his words held in the debasing fetters of commonplace. I certainly thought this very silly on Stern's part, but my profession comes first, and the Old Man is a good firm. So we settled:

- 1°. That he should supply every week a couple of chapters for my book;
- 2°. That I should change nothing in his writing;
- 3°. That Frits should correct the grammar;
- 4°. That I should from time to time write a chapter myself, to give the book an appearance of solidity;
- 5°. That the title should be: *The coffee-sales of the Netherlands Trading Company*;
- 6°. That Mary should make a neat copy for press, but that we should have patience with her whenever the laundry things came home;
- 7°. That the finished chapters should every week be read aloud at the party;
- 8°. That all immorality should be avoided;
- 9°. That my name should not appear on the title-page, as I am a broker;
- 10°. That Stern should be authorized to publish a *German*, *French*, and *English* translation of my book, because — so he maintained — such works are better understood in foreign countries than with us;
- 11°. (*Stern emphatically insisted on this.*) That I should send Shawlman a ream of paper, a gross of pens and a bottle of ink.

I acquiesced in everything, as my book was very urgent. The following day Stern had finished his first chapter, and there you see, reader, the answer to the question how a coffee-broker — *Last & Co., Laurier Canal, No. 37* — comes to be writing a book that resembles a novel.

No sooner, however, had Stern set to work, than he was confronted by obstacles. Besides the difficulty among so many ma-

terials of selecting and arranging the necessary, there continually occurred in the manuscripts words and expressions that he did not understand, and that to me also were strange. It was most often Javanese or Malay. Also there were here and there abbreviations which were difficult to interpret. I realized that we could not do without Shawlman, and as I don't think it a good thing for a young man to form undesirable connections, I did not wish to send either Stern or Frits to him. I took with me sugar-plums that were left from the latest party — for I always think of everything — and I looked him up. His abode was not exactly sumptuous, but equality for all men, which would of course include their dwellings, is surely a chimera. He had said so himself in his essay on the claims to happiness. Moreover I don't like people who are always discontented.

It was in the Long-Leyden-Side-Strēet, in a back room. The lower storey was occupied by a second-hand dealer who sold a variety of things, such as cups, dishes, furniture, old books, glassware, portraits of Van Speyk¹ and other articles. I was in dread of breaking anything, for in such a case people always demand more money for things than they are worth. A little girl was sitting on the stoop, dressing her doll. I asked whether Mr. Shawlman lived there. She ran away, and the mother came.

"Yes, he lives here, Sir. Just step inside up the stairs to the second passage, and then another stair and then you've got it, you can't miss it. Minnie, just go and tell 'em there's a gentleman. Who shall she say it is, Sir?"

I said I was Mr. Drystubble, coffee-broker, from the Laurier Canal, but that I would announce myself. I climbed as high as she had said, and in the third passage heard a child's voice singing, "*Presently father comes, dearest papa.*" I knocked, and the door was opened by a woman or lady — I really didn't exactly know what to make of her. She was very pale. Her features bore marks of fatigue, and reminded me of my wife when she has just finished

¹ A national hero of the Dutch.

the laundry things. She was dressed in a long white shirt, or robe without a waist, that hung down to her knees, and that was fastened in front with a small black pin. Instead of a proper skirt or dress, she wore underneath a piece of dark linen with a flower-pattern, that seemed to be wrapped several times round her body, and fitted rather tightly round her hips and knees. There was not a trace of any pleats, width or girth, as surely ought to be the case with a woman's dress. I was glad I had not sent Frits, for her get-up appeared to me very improper, and its strange character was further accentuated by the freedom of her movements, as though she felt quite at her ease. The creature did not seem to be in the least aware that she did not look like other women. It also appeared to me that she did not feel in any way awkward about my visit. She hid nothing under the table, moved no chairs about, and did nothing that, after all, is customary when a stranger of genteel appearance arrives.

Just like a Chinese, she had her hair combed back straight, and tied in a kind of loop or knot behind. Afterwards I learnt that her attire was a sort of *Indian apparel*, which over there they call *sârong* and *Kabâi*; but I thought it very ugly.

"Are you 'Juffrouw' Shawlman?" I asked.

"To whom have I the honour of speaking?" she said, in a tone that seemed to imply that I also should have introduced some *honour* into my question.

Well, I am not fond of paying compliments. It's a different thing with a principal, and I have been in business too long than that I should not know my people. But to use fine phrases on a third floor seemed unnecessary to me. So I stated briefly that I was Mr. Drystubble, coffee-broker, Laurier Canal, No. 37, and that I wished to speak to her husband. Of course, why should I mince matters!

She motioned me to a cane chair, and took a little girl on her knee, who sat on the floor playing. The little boy whom I had heard singing looked me fixedly in the face, and took me in from

head to foot. He also did not seem the least bit shy! He was a lad about six years old, also dressed most peculiarly. His wide pants scarcely reached half-way down his thighs, and his little legs were bare from thence to his ankles. Very indecent, I thought. "Have you¹ come to see papa?" he asked all at once, and I immediately realized that the education of that child left much to be desired, otherwise he would have spoken in the second person plural. But as I felt a bit awkward myself, and therefore wanted to talk, I answered:

"Yes, little man, I have come to see your papa. Do you think he'll soon be here?"

"I don't know. He is out, looking for money to buy me a color-box" (Frits writes: *colour-box*, but I don't. There is no need to make words longer by useless letters.)

"Quiet, my boy," said the woman. "Play with your prints, or with your Chinese play-box."

"Don't you remember that that gentleman yesterday took everything away?"

He even addressed his mother in the second person singular, and it seemed that there had been a "gentleman" who had taken "everything away" . . . a cheerful visit! The woman did not seem too happy either, for she furtively wiped her eye, while taking the little girl to her young brother. "There," she said, "play a little with Nonni." A peculiar name. And he did.

"Well, Juffrouw," I asked, "do you expect your husband soon?"

"I can't say for certain," she answered.

Suddenly the little boy, who had been playing at sailing ships with his little sister, left her and asked me:

"Sir, why do you say to my mother 'Juffrouw'?"

"Well, little man," I said, "what else should I say!"

"Why . . . the same as other people! The 'Juffrouw' is downstairs. She sells plates and peg tops."

¹ He used the familiar second person singular, French "*tu*."

Now *I* am a coffee-broker — Last & Co., Laurier Canal, No. 37 — there are thirteen of us in the office, and if I count Stern, who receives no salary, there are fourteen. Very well then, *my* wife is “Juffrouw,” and yet I was to say *Madam* to *this* woman. Surely, this was absurd. Everyone must keep to his class, and what is more, only yesterday the bailiffs had taken away some of the belongings. So I considered my “Juffrouw” quite all right, and stuck to it.

I asked why Shawlman had not called at my house for his parcel? She seemed to know about it, and said they had been away, to Brussels. There he had done work for the *Indépendance*, but he had not been able to stay there because his articles had caused the paper to be several times refused admittance across the French frontier. They had returned to Amsterdam a few days ago, because Shawlman was to get employment here. . . .

“I suppose with Ripesucker?” I asked.

Yes, that was it! But the thing had fallen through, she said. Of this, of course, I knew more than she did herself. He had dropped the *Aglaiä*, and was lazy, pedantic and sickly . . . exactly, that’s why he had got the sack.

And, she continued, he would be sure to come and see me soon, perhaps he was at my house now, for an answer to the request he had made me.

I said he had better call, but he must not ring the bell, for that only gave the servant unnecessary trouble. If he waited a little, I said, the door was bound to be opened some time, when someone or other had to go out. And so I left, and took my sugar-plums back with me, for, speaking frankly, I did not like things there. I did not feel comfortable. Surely a broker isn’t a carrier, I should say, and I maintain that I look respectable. I was wearing my fur coat, and yet she kept sitting down quite simply, and talked to her children as calmly as if she had been alone. Also she seemed to have been crying, and I cannot bear discontented people. Then, it was cold and uncomfortable there — probably because most of the

belongings had been fetched away — and I like cosiness in a room. During my walk home I made up my mind to give Bastians another chance, for I don't like driving anyone out into the street.

Now comes Stern's first week. It is self-evident that much in it does not please me. But I have to abide by article *two*, and the Rosemeyers have approved of it. I believe they butter up Stern because he has an uncle in Hamburg who is in sugar.

Shawlman had indeed called. He had seen Stern, and explained to him some words and things which he did not understand. I mean which Stern did not understand. I must now ask the reader to wade through the next chapters, then later on I again promise something more solid, *from myself*, Batavus Drystubble, coffee-broker, Last & Co., Laurier Canal, No. 37.



CHAPTER V

ABOUT ten o'clock in the morning there was an unusual amount of movement on the main road in Java that connects the division of *Pandeglang* with *Lebak*. "The main road" is perhaps a slight exaggeration in respect to the wide footpath that, from politeness and for want of a better name, one called the "road." But when, with a coach and four, one started for *Serang*, the chief township in the residency of *Bantam*, intending to drive to *Rang-Betoong*, the new centre of *Lebak*, one might be fairly sure of arriving there some time or other. It was, therefore, a road. It is true that time after time one would be stuck in the mud, which in the *Bantam* lowlands is heavy, clayey, and sticky; it is true that again and again one would be compelled to call to one's assistance the inhabitants of the nearest villages — even though they were not very near, for the villages are not numerous in those parts — but when at last one had succeeded in getting together some twenty agricultural labourers from the vicinity, it was usually not very long before horses and coach had once more been launched on *terra firma*. The driver would crack his whip, the "runners" — in Europe one would, I suppose, say "footmen," or rather, there is nothing in Europe that corresponds with these "runners" — those incomparable "runners" then, with their short thick whips, trotted again by the side of the four horses, shrieked indescribable sounds, and beat the horses under the stomach by way of encouragement. And in that way one would jolt along for some time, until again the unpleasant moment arrived when one sank into the mud beyond the axles. Then the shouts for assistance would begin once more. One waited patiently till help arrived, and . . . jogged further along.

Often, when coming along that road, I felt as if in one place or another I should find a coach with travellers from the last century, who had sunk into the mud and been forgotten. Yet this never happened. I must suppose, therefore, that all who ever came this way arrived at last at their destination.

One would make a decided mistake if one imagined one could form a conception of the entire main road through Java from the character of this road in *Lebak*. The real highroad with its many branches, which Marshal Daendels had constructed with considerable sacrifice of life, is indeed a magnificent piece of work, and one is amazed at the energy of the man who, in spite of all the obstacles which his envious opponents in the motherland placed in his way, dared brave the unwillingness of the populations and the discontent of the Chiefs, in order to bring something into existence which to this day excites and deserves the admiration of every visitor.

As a consequence, no post-horse service in Europe — not even in England, Russia or Hungary — could be compared with that in Java. Across high mountain-backs, on the edge of precipices that make one shudder, the heavily packed mail-coach flies onward in an even gallop. The driver sits as though nailed to the box, for hours, nay for whole days at a stretch, and wields the heavy whip with an iron arm. He knows exactly how to calculate where and how much he must hold back the plunging horses, in order that, after a headlong flight down a mountain-slope, at yonder turning . . .

“Great God, the road is . . . gone! We are going down into the precipice,” shrieks the inexperienced traveller, “there is no road . . . there is only the abyss!”

Yes, so it seems. The road bends, and just when one galloping leap more would make the leaders lose their foothold, the horses turn off, and swing the coach round the corner. They fly up the mountain-rise, which a moment before you did not see, and . . . the precipice lies behind you.

There are, on such occasions, moments when the carriage rests on nothing but the wheels on the outside of the curve you describe; the centrifugal force has lifted the inside wheels from the ground. It requires self-control to refrain from shutting one's eyes, and he who travels in Java for the first time writes home to his people in Europe that he has been in danger of his life. But when one feels at home there, one laughs at such fear.

It is not my intention, especially at the outset of my story, to occupy the reader at any length with descriptions of places, landscapes, or buildings. I fear too much that I might put him off by what would perhaps seem wire-drawn diffuseness; and only later on, when I feel that I shall have won him, when I see in his look and attitude that the fate of the heroine, who somewhere leaps from the balcony of a fourth storey, holds him spellbound, then, with a bold contempt for the law of gravitation, I shall leave her floating between heaven and earth, until I have relieved my feelings with an accurate sketch of the beauties of the landscape, or of the building that appears to have been placed there to supply a pretext for an essay covering several pages on mediæval architecture. All those castles resemble each other. Invariably their style of building is heterogeneous. The residential portion always dates back a few more reigns than the annexes that were added under some later king. The towers are in a state of dilapidation. . . .

Dear reader, there are no towers. A tower is a conception, a dream, an ideal, an invention, an unbearable boast! There are semi-towers and . . . turrets.

The fanaticism that conceived it as a duty to place towers on edifices erected in honour of this saint or that one, did not last long enough to complete them, and the spire that is intended to point the faithful to heaven usually rests a couple of landings too low on the massive base, reminding one of the man without thighs at the fair. Only turrets, and tiny steeples on village churches, have ever been completed.

It is truly not flattering for Western civilization, that rarely the

idea of perfecting a great work has been able to hold out long enough for the purpose of seeing that work completed. I am not now speaking of enterprises the completion of which was necessary to cover expenses. He that would know exactly what I mean should go and see Cologne Cathedral. Let him take full account of the grand conception of that building, in the soul of the architect, Gerhard Von Riehl . . . of the faith in the hearts of the people that enabled him to begin and continue that work . . . of the influence of such ideas as required so colossal an expression to serve as the visible image of the unseen religious feeling . . . and let him compare this tremendous strain with the movement that a few centuries after gave birth to the moment in which the work was suspended. . . .

A deep chasm lies between Erwin Von Steinbach and our modern builders! I know, of course, that for years people have been trying to fill this chasm. In Cologne also they are again building at the Cathedral. But will they be able to re-connect the broken thread? Will one be able to find again in *our* days, what *then* constituted the power of church dignitary and building-lord? I believe not. Money, no doubt, will be obtainable, and for money one may buy bricks and mortar. One may pay the artist who will submit a design, and the bricklayer who does the masonry. But not to be bought for money is the lost and yet venerable sentiment that in a building-scheme saw a poem, a poem in granite, that spoke loudly to the people, a poem in marble, that stood there as an immovable eternal prayer.

On the boundary, then, between *Lebak* and *Pandeglang*, there was one morning an unusual commotion. Hundreds of saddle-horses, and at least a thousand people — a good number for the place — walked up and down in busy expectation. Here one saw the heads of the villages, and the heads of the districts of *Lebak*, all with their retinues, and judging by the beautiful Arab cross-breed which, in his rich trappings, stood gnawing the silver snaffle, there was also present a head of higher rank. This indeed was the

case. The Regent of *Lebak*, *Radhen Adhipatti Karta Natta Negara*, had with a large attendance left *Rangkas Betoong*, and had, in spite of his great age, made the twelve or fourteen stages which separate his residence from the boundaries of the neighbouring division of *Pandeglang*.

A new Assistant-Resident was expected, and custom, which, in India more than anywhere, has the force of law, dictates that the officer charged with the government of a division shall be suitably received on his arrival. The Controller, a man of middle age, who for some months after the death of the previous Assistant-Resident had, as next in rank, looked after his late chief's duties, was also present.

As soon as the time of arrival of the new Assistant-Resident had become known, a *pendoppo* had been hastily erected, a table and some chairs had been brought there, and some refreshments were placed in readiness. In this *pendoppo* the Regent and the Controller awaited the arrival of the new chief.

After a hat with a broad brim, an umbrella, or a hollow tree, a *pendoppo* is undoubtedly the simplest expression of the idea *roof*. Imagine four or six bamboo posts, driven into the ground, and connected at the top by further bamboos, whereon is fixed a covering made of the long leaves of the water-palm which in these parts is called *atap*, and you have a picture of such a *pendoppo*. It is, as you see, as simple as possible, and here, be it understood, it was simply meant to serve as a *pied-à-terre* for the European and native officials who came to welcome their new chief on the boundary.

I did not express myself quite correctly when I called the Assistant-Resident the Chief, also of the Regent. A digression on the mechanism of the government in these regions is, for a clear understanding of the things that are to follow, at this place necessary.

Netherlands India so-called — the adjective “Netherlands” appears to me somewhat inexact, but it was adopted officially —

must, as regards the relation of the mother-country to the population, be divided into two very different main sections. One of these is composed of tribes whose princes and princelings have recognized the authority of the Netherlands as suzerain, but with whom the direct ruling power still remains more or less in the hands of the native Chiefs. The other, comprising — with a very slight, perhaps only apparent exception — all *Java*, is immediately subject to *The Netherlands*. There is here no question of tribute, or levy, or alliance. *The Javanese* is a *Dutch subject*. The King of *The Netherlands* is *his* King. The descendants of his former princes and lords are *Dutch* officials. They are appointed, transferred, promoted, by the Governor-General, who rules in the name of the *King*. The criminal is convicted and sentenced under a law which is issued from *The Hague*. The taxes the Javanese pays flow into the treasury of *The Netherlands*.

It is only with this part of the Dutch possessions, which therefore forms an integral portion of the *Kingdom of the Netherlands*, that these pages in the main will deal.

The Governor-General is assisted by a Council, which, however, has no determining voice in his decisions. In Batavia the various branches of Government are divided into "departments," at the head of which are placed Directors, who form the link between the highest Government, that of the Governor-General, and the Residents in the provinces. In cases, however, of a *political nature*, these officials apply direct to the Governor-General.

The title *Resident* derives from the time when *The Netherlands* Government only ruled the population *indirectly* as a *feudal lord*, and was represented at the Courts of the still reigning Princes by *Residents*. The Princes are no more, and the Residents have become, as district Governors or *prefects*, rulers of country divisions. Their sphere of activity has changed, but the name remains.

It is these Residents who actually represent Dutch authority with the Javanese population. The people know neither the Governor-General, nor the Councillors of Dutch India, nor the Directors in

Batavia. They only know the *Resident*, and the officials who rule under his direction.

Such a residency — there are some which contain nearly a million souls — is divided into three, four, or five divisions or regencies, at the head of which are placed the Assistant-Residents. Under these, again, the executive officers are the Controllers, Inspectors, and a number of other officers necessary for the collection of the taxes, for the supervision of Agriculture, for the erection of buildings, for Water Supply Works, for Police and for Justice.

In each division a native Chief of high rank, with the title of *Regent*, assists the Assistant-Resident. Such Regent, although his relation to the Government, and his position, are entirely those of a *paid officer*, is always of the highest nobility of the land, and often belongs to the family of the princes who in the past ruled independently over that division or the neighbouring regions. An eminently shrewd political use, therefore, is made of their ancient feudal influence — which in Asia is generally of great importance, and with the majority of the tribes is regarded as a matter of religion — whilst, for the purpose of appointing these heads as officers, a hierarchy is created, above all of which is found the Dutch authority, exercised by the Governor-General.

There is nothing new under the sun. Were not the Landgraves, Margraves, *Gau*-graves and Burgraves of the German Empire similarly appointed by the Emperor, and mostly chosen from the Barons? Without wishing to digress on the subject of the origin of the nobility, which lies in nature itself, I must nevertheless here remark that in our own part of the world, and yonder in distant India, the same causes have had the same results. A country having to be governed at a long distance requires officials to represent the central authority. Under the system of arbitrary military power, the Romans, for this purpose, chose the Prefects, at first usually the commanders of the legions that had subdued the lands in question. Such lands remained, as might be expected, *occupied provinces*, i.e. *conquered* regions. But when later, in the case of

the centralized power of the German Empire, the need was felt of binding some distant people by other means than material superiority only, as soon as a far-off region was considered, by virtue of similarity of origin, language and customs, as belonging more directly to the Empire, the necessity was realized of charging someone with the direction of affairs who not only was autochthonous to such country, but who by his own rank was elevated above his fellow citizens there, so that obedience to the commands of the Emperor should be facilitated by the coherent tendency of submission to the person entrusted with the execution of these commands. By this means, at the same time, the expenses of a standing army were entirely or partially obviated, and therewith a burden on the public treasury, or, as was otherwise mostly the case, on the provinces themselves which had to be guarded by such army. Thus the first Counts were chosen from among the Barons of the country, and correctly speaking the word *Count* is therefore not a title of nobility, but only the description of the person charged with a certain *office*. And I believe that in the middle ages the opinion was current that the German Emperor certainly had the right to appoint Counts, i.e. *district-rulers*, and Dukes, i.e. *army-leaders*, but that on the other hand the Barons held that they were the equals of the Emperor as regards birth, and were only dependent on God, save for the obligation of serving the Emperor provided the latter had been elected with their consent and from their numbers. A Count filled an *office* to which the Emperor had called him. A Baron considered himself a Baron "*by the grace of God*." The Counts represented the Emperor, and as such flew *his* banner, i.e. the standard of the Empire. A Baron raised a contingent of followers under his own flag, as a *bannerlord*.

Now the circumstance that Counts and Dukes were usually selected from among the Barons caused them to throw the importance of their office into the balance with the influence they derived from their birth, and from this, especially when the heredity of these offices had become customary, sprang afterwards the prefer-

ence those titles gained above that of Baron. Even to this day many a baronial family — without imperial or royal letters patent, i.e. such family as derives its nobility from the origin of the land, one that was *always* noble *because* it was noble — *autochthonous* — would decline elevation to the rank of Count as derogatory. There are instances of this.

Naturally the persons charged with the government of such a country sought to obtain sanction from the Emperor that their sons, or, in the absence of these, their relatives, should succeed them in their office. This, in fact, happened usually, though I do not believe that the right to such succession was ever *organically* realized, at least as regards those office-bearers in *The Netherlands*, for instance the Counts of Holland, Zealand, Hainault or Flanders, the Dukes of Brabant, Guelderland, etc. It was at first a favour, then a custom, and finally a necessity, but never became this form of heredity law.

Approximately in the same manner — as regards the choice of the persons, as here there is no question of equality in the duties, although even in this respect a certain correspondence is noticeable — there is at the head of a division in Java a native official who combines the rank given him by the Government with his *autochthonous* influence, in order to facilitate the management of affairs to the officer who represents *Dutch* rule. Here also heredity, without being consolidated by law, has become a custom. Already during the lifetime of the Regent these affairs are most often arranged, and it counts as a reward for zeal and faithful service when he receives the promise that he will be succeeded in his position by his son. It requires very important reasons to depart from this rule, and where this should be the case, the successor is nevertheless usually chosen from the members of the same family.

The relation between European officials and such highly placed Javanese grandees is of a very delicate nature. The Assistant-Resident of a division is the responsible person. He has his instructions, and is supposed to be the head of the division. Yet in

spite of this the Regent, by virtue of his local knowledge, his birth, his influence on the population, his financial resources and corresponding mode of life, is in a much higher position. Moreover the Regent, as the representative of the *Javanese element* of a district, and being understood to speak in the name of the many thousands of souls that form the population of his regency, is, even in the eyes of the Government, a much more important person than the modest *European* official, whose discontent would occasion no apprehension, as there is no difficulty about replacing him, whilst the more or less unfavourable disposition of a Regent might become the germ of disturbance or rebellion.

From all this, then, results the strange circumstance that it is in reality the *inferior* who issues orders to the *superior*. The Assistant-Resident instructs the Regent to furnish him with reports. He instructs him to have the taxes collected. He calls upon him to attend the district council, which he, the Assistant-Resident, presides over. He censures him when found guilty of dereliction of duty. This most peculiar relation is only rendered possible by extremely courteous formalities, which, however, need exclude neither cordiality nor, when necessary, severity, and I think the tone to be observed in this relationship is fairly well indicated by the official instructions on the point: the *European* official must treat the *native* officer who assists him as a *younger brother*.

But he must not forget that this *younger brother* is greatly beloved — or feared — by the parents, and that, in eventual differences, his greater “age” would count as a reason for blaming him for not having treated his *younger brother* with greater indulgence or tact.

However, the innate courtesy of the *Javanese* grandee — even the lower-class *Javanese* is far more polite than his *European* equal — makes this apparently difficult relation more bearable than it would otherwise be.

Let the *European* be well-bred and discreet, let him behave with kindly dignity, and he may rest assured that the Regent on his

side will make it easy for him to govern. The otherwise irritating command, when issued in the form of a request, will be carried out punctiliously. The difference in rank, birth, wealth, will be effaced by the Regent himself, who raises the European to his level, as being the representative of the King of the Netherlands, and in the end a relation which, superficially considered, would unavoidably seem to provoke conflict, becomes often enough a source of pleasant intercourse.

I said that such Regents have also through wealth a natural precedence over the European official, and this is only to be expected. The European, when called upon to rule a province in area equal to many German duchies, is usually a person at or above middle age; married and perhaps a father. He fills the office *for a living*. His income is barely enough, often even *not* enough to provide necessaries for his family. The Regent is *Tommongong*, *Adhipatti*, or even *Pangérang*,¹ i.e. a *Javanese prince*. With him the question is not that of a *living*, he has to live in such manner as his people are accustomed to see among their aristocracy. While the *European* lives in a house, *his* residence is often a *Kratoon*,² with many houses and villages inside it. Where the *European* has one wife with three or four children, *he* maintains a number of women with all that this implies. Where the *European* goes out riding followed by a few officials, not more than are required on his round of inspection for furnishing information on the way, the Regent is accompanied by the hundreds who belong to his retinue, which in the eyes of his people is inseparable from his high rank. The *European* lives on a middle-class footing, the Regent lives — or is supposed to live — as a prince.

But all this has to be *paid for*. The Dutch Government, which has based itself on the influence of these Regents, knows this, and nothing is therefore more natural than that it has raised their income to a height which would appear exaggerated to the *non-*

¹ Javanese titles, here placed in the order of their importance.

² Princely residence.

Indian, but which in reality is rarely sufficient to meet the expenses incidental to the mode of living of such native Chiefs. It is nothing unusual for Regents with an income of two or three hundred thousand guilders to be nevertheless in financial embarrassment. This is in a large measure due to the princely carelessness with which they squander their income, their negligence in watching their subordinates, their mania for buying, and *especially* the advantage often taken of these qualities by Europeans.

One might classify the incomes of the Javanese Chiefs under four heads. First, their definite monthly allowance. Secondly, a fixed sum as compensation for rights relinquished to the Dutch Government by purchase. Thirdly, a reward in proportion to the quantity of produce yielded by their respective regencies, such as coffee, sugar, indigo, cinnamon, etc. And, finally, the arbitrary disposal of the labour and property of their subjects.

The last two sources of income require some elucidation. The Javanese is by nature an agriculturist. The soil whereon he was born, which promises much for little labour, allures him to this, and more especially is he devoted heart and soul to the cultivation of his rice-fields, in which he displays particular skill. He grows up amidst his *sawahs* and *gagahs* and *tipars*,¹ and accompanies his father to the fields at a very early age, to assist him in the labour with plough and spade, and on dams and waterworks for the irrigation of his lands. He counts his years by harvests, he calculates time and season by the colour of his crops, he feels at home with the mates who have cut the paddy with him, he seeks his wife among the girls of the *dessah*,² who at eve, with the sound of merry songs, stamp the rice in order to remove the husk . . . the possession of a pair of buffaloes to draw his plough is the ideal that beckons him . . . in a word, rice culture is to the Javanese what the vintage in the Rhine-districts and the South of France is to the wine-growers of those countries.

But strangers came from the West, who made themselves lords

¹ Three different kinds of rice-fields.

² Village.

of his land. They wished to make profits out of the productiveness of the soil and commanded the native to devote part of his labour and time to the growth of other products which would yield a greater margin of gain in the *European* markets. To make the lower man do this, a very simple policy sufficed. He obeys his chiefs, and so it was only necessary to win over those chiefs by promising them part of the profit, and . . . the scheme succeeded completely.

When one has regard to the immense quantity of Javanese products put up for sale in the Netherlands, one must at once be convinced of the effectiveness of this policy, though one may not judge it a noble one. For if anyone should ask whether the cultivator of the soil himself receives a reward proportionate to the results, the answer would have to be a negative one. The Government compels him to grow on *his* land what pleases *it*, it punishes him when he sells the crop so produced to anyone but *it*, and *it* fixes the price which it pays him. The cost of transport to Europe, by a privileged trading company, is high. The payments allowed to the Chiefs by way of encouragement are a further charge on the purchasing price, and . . . as in any case the whole business *must* yield profit, this profit can be made in no other way than by paying the Javanese exactly enough to keep him from starving, to the end that the productive power of the nation shall not decrease.

To the European officials also a reward is paid in proportion to the production.

It is true, then, that the poor Javanese is lashed onward with the whip of a double authority, it is true that he is often withdrawn from his paddy-fields, it is true that famine often results from these measures, but . . . merrily flutter the flags at *Batavia*, *Samarang*, *Soerabaya*, *Passarooan*, *Bezooki*, *Probolingo*, *Patjitan*, *Tjilatjap*, the flags on board the vessels that are being loaded with the harvests that enrich the Netherlands.

Famine? In rich, fertile, blessed Java, *famine?* Yes, reader. Only a few years ago whole districts were starved out. Mothers

offered their children for sale to obtain food. Mothers ate their children. . . .

But then the motherland took a hand in the matter. In the Councils of the people's representatives there was dissatisfaction, and the Governor-General of that day had to issue instructions that the increase of so-called *European market-products* should in future not be carried out to the limit of famine.

It seems that just then I grew bitter. But what would you think of one who could write down such things *without* bitterness?

It now remains for me to speak of the last and principal form of income of the native chiefs: the arbitrary disposal of the persons and property of their subjects.

According to the general conception in almost all Asia, the subject, with all that he possesses, belongs to the ruler. This is also the case in Java, and the descendants or relatives of the former princes are only too glad to make use of the ignorance of the population, who do not clearly understand that their *Tommongong* or *Adhipatti* or *Pangerang* is now a *paid official*, who has sold his own and their rights for a definite income, and that therefore the poorly paid labour in coffee-plantation or sugar-field has taken the place of the taxes which were formerly exacted from the dwellers on the land by their lords. Nothing, therefore, is of more usual occurrence than that hundreds of families are summoned from a great distance to work, *without payment*, fields that belong to the Regent. Nothing is of more usual occurrence than the supply, unpaid for, of foodstuffs for the requirements of the Court of the Regent. And should this Regent cast a covetous eye on the horse, the buffalo, the daughter, the wife of the inferior man, it would be unheard-of for the latter to refuse the desired object.

There are Regents who make a moderate use of such arbitrary disposals, and who only exact from the labouring man what is absolutely indispensable to keep up their rank. Others go a little further, and nowhere is this illegality altogether absent. And undoubtedly it is difficult, if not impossible, to root out such abuse

entirely, as it reaches deep down into the very nature of the population which is the victim of it. The Javanese is generous, especially when it is a matter of proving his attachment to his Chief, to the descendant of those whom his forefathers obeyed. He would even hold that he fell short of the respect due to his hereditary lord if he entered the lordly kraton without presents. And such presents are, it must be admitted, often of such small value that to decline them would have in it something of a humiliation, and often, therefore, this custom might rather be compared to the homage of a child that seeks to express his love for his father by offering a small gift, than that it should be conceived as a tribute to arbitrary tyranny.

But . . . in this way a *gentle custom* hinders the abolition of *abuse*.

If the *aloen-aloen*¹ in front of the residence of the Regent were in a neglected state, the neighbouring population would be ashamed of it, and it would require considerable authority to *prevent* them from ridding that area of weeds, and from putting it into a condition corresponding with the rank of the Regent. To offer payment for this would generally be considered an insult. But alongside this *aloen-aloen*, or elsewhere, lie *sawahs* that are waiting for the plough, or for a duct to bring the water to them, often from a distance of miles . . . these *sawahs* belong to the Regent. He summons, in order to work or irrigate *his* fields, the population of whole villages, whose own *sawahs* are just as much in need of being worked . . . this is the *abuse*.

The evil is known to the Government, and when one reads the Government publication in which are printed the laws, instructions and manuals for the officials, one applauds the humaneness that appears to have presided at the framing of these. Everywhere the European who is clothed with authority in the interior is commanded, as one of his most sacred obligations, to protect the population against their own submissiveness and the rapacity of the

¹ Court.

Chiefs. And, as though it were not sufficient to prescribe this duty in *general*, an additional *separate oath* is demanded from the *Assistant-Residents*, when assuming the control of a division, that they shall consider this paternal care of the population as one of their *first duties*.

This, assuredly, constitutes a glorious calling. To support justice, to protect the humble against the powerful, to defend the weak against the *force majeure* of the strong, to demand the return of the poor man's ewe-lamb from the pen of the princely robber . . . is not this enough to make the heart glow with joy, at the thought that one is called to so glorious a task? And if at times the official in the interior of Java should be dissatisfied with his position or reward, let him turn his gaze to the sublime duty imposed upon him, to the supreme delight that the fulfilment of *such* a duty carries with it, and he will desire no other reward.

But . . . that duty is not easy. First of all one has to decide definitely where *use* has ceased to make room for *abuse*. And . . . where abuse *exists*, where indeed robbery or tyranny *has* been practised, the victims themselves are but too frequently accomplices, be it from too much submissiveness, be it from fear, be it from distrust of the will or the power of the person appointed to protect them. Everyone knows that the *European* official may be called any moment to another position, whilst the *Regent*, the *powerful Regent*, remains. Besides, there are so many ways of appropriating the possessions of a poor simple-minded person. When a *man-tree*¹ tells him that the Regent wishes to have his horse, with the result that the desired animal is shortly after lodged in the stables of the Regent, this does not prove by any means — oh, certainly not! — that the Regent had not the intention to pay a high price for the animal . . . sometime. When hundreds are working in the fields of a Chief without receiving payment, it by no means follows that this is being done on *his* behalf. May it not have been his intention to make the harvest over to them, from a purely

¹ Native inspector.

humanitarian calculation that his land was in a better position, more fertile than theirs, and that therefore it would reward their labour more liberally?

Besides, where is the European official to get witnesses who will have the courage to make a declaration against their lord, the dreaded Regent? And, were he to risk a charge *without being able to prove it*, what then would become of the relation of an *elder brother*, who in that case would, without apparent cause, have reflected on the honour of his *younger brother*? What would become of the good opinions of the Government, which gives him bread for his service, but which would deny him that bread, dismissing him as incapable, if he had lightly suspected or accused a person so highly placed as a *Tommongong*, *Adhipatti* or *Pangerang*?

No, certainly, that duty is not an easy one! This is plainly evidenced by the fact that the tendency of the native Chiefs to overstep the limit of permissible disposal of labour and property of their subjects is everywhere frankly admitted . . . that all Assistant-Residents take the oath that they will oppose this criminal malpractice, and . . . that, nevertheless, but *very rarely*, a Regent is charged with arbitrary coercion or abuse of power.

It appears, then, that an almost insurmountable difficulty prevents the carrying into effect of the oath that the official shall *protect the native population against exploitation and extortion*.



CHAPTER VI

CONTROLLER VERBRUGGE was a good man. When one looked at him, as he sat there in his blue cloth uniform, with embroidered oak and orange branches on the collar and cuffs, one could not fail to recognize in him the type prevalent among the Dutch in India . . . a type, it may be remarked in passing, which differs considerably from the Dutch in Holland. Indolent as long as there was nothing to do, and quite free from all the fussiness which in Europe counts for zeal, but zealous where action was necessary . . . simple and cordial towards all who belonged to his entourage, communicative, obliging and hospitable . . . well-mannered without stiffness . . . receptive to good impressions . . . honest and sincere, without however any inclination to become a martyr to these qualities . . . in a word, he was a man who would impress one anywhere as being in the right place, although no one would suggest that he would leave his mark on the age, an honour which certainly also he would not have sought.

He sat in the centre of the *pendoppo* at the table, which was covered with a white table-cloth and laden with dishes. Now and then he more or less impatiently asked the *mandoor*-orderly, i.e. the officer in charge of the police and office-attendants at the assistant-residency, using the words of Mrs. Bluebeard's sister, whether no one was coming yet. Then he would get up, try in vain to rattle his spurs on the firm-trodden clay floor of the *pendoppo*, light his cigar for the twentieth time, and sit down again disappointed. He spoke little.

And yet he might have spoken, for he was not alone. In saying this I do not exactly refer to the company of the twenty or thirty Javanese servants, *mantrees*, and orderlies, who sat outside the

pendoppo squatting on the ground, nor to the many who were continually running in and out, nor to the large number of natives of all ranks who respectively either held the horses or rode them about . . . no, the Regent of *Lebak* himself, *Radhen Adhipatti Karta Natta Negara*, was seated opposite him.

Waiting is always tiresome. A quarter of an hour seems an hour, an hour half a day, and so on. . . . Verbrugge might very well have been a little more talkative. The Regent of *Lebak* was a well-bred old man, who could talk on many subjects with intelligence and judgment. One had only to look at him to be convinced that the majority of the Europeans who came into contact with him could have learnt more from him than he from them. His vivacious dark eyes contradicted by their fire the lassitude of his features and the whiteness of his hair. What he said was usually well thought out — a characteristic which, for that matter, is common to pretty well all orientals of breeding — and when in conversation with him, one felt that one had to look upon his words as though they were parts of letters, minutes of which were kept in his archives for reference if required. This may probably seem rather unpleasant to those who are not accustomed to intercourse with Javanese grandees, yet it is not difficult to avoid all subjects of conversation that may give offence, especially as they themselves will never brusquely seek to change the course of the dialogue, which would militate against the Eastern conception of good form. He, therefore, who has reason to avoid touching upon any special point, need only talk about insignificant trifles, and he may rest assured that a Javanese chief will not, by any undesired turn in the conversation, take him where he would rather not be led.

There are, it is true, divergent opinions as to the best manner of dealing with those chiefs. But it seems to me that natural straightforwardness, without any attempt at diplomatic cautiousness, deserves the preference.

Anyhow, Verbrugge began with a trivial remark about the weather and the rain.

"Yes, it is the west monsoon," said the Regent.

This, of course, Verbrugge knew quite well: it was January. But what *he* had said about the rain was equally well-known to the Regent. After this another brief silence. The Regent, with a scarce perceptible movement of his head, beckoned one of the servants who sat squatting at the entrance of the *pendoppo*. A little boy, charmingly attired in a blue velvet coatee, white pants, with a gilt belt which held his *sarong*¹ round the loins, and on his head the attractive *kain kapala*,² below which his black eyes peeped out mischievously, crept in a crouching position to the feet of the Regent, put down the golden box containing the tobacco, the lime, the *seeree*,³ the *penang*,⁴ and the *gambeer*,⁵ made the *slamat*,⁶ by raising both hands joined to his deeply bowed forehead, and then offered his master the precious box.

"The road must be difficult after so much rain," said the Regent, as though to supply an explanation of the long wait. While speaking he spread some lime on a *betel*-leaf.⁷

"In *Pandeglang* the road is not so bad," answered Verbrugge, who, if it may be assumed that he had no intention of touching on any offensive subject, surely made this reply somewhat thoughtlessly. For he should have remembered that a Regent of *Lebak* cannot be pleased to hear the roads of *Pandeglang* praised, even though they should in reality be better than those in *Lebak*.

The *Adhipatti* did not make the mistake of answering too quickly. The little *maas*⁸ had already crept backward in a crouching position as far as the entrance of the *pendoppo*, where he took his place among his mates . . . the Regent had already dyed his lips and few remaining teeth brown-red with the juice of his *seeree*, before he said:

¹ Wrapper.

² Head-wrapper.

³ A leaf which is chewed.

⁴ A nut chewed with the *seeree*.

⁵ A further vegetable addition to the preceding.

⁶ Greeting. ⁷ *Betel* is the combination of 3, 4, and 5. ⁸ Page.

"Yes, there are a good many people in *Pandeglang*."

For those who knew the Regent and Controller, for those to whom the conditions in *Lebak* were no secret, it would have been plainly evident that the conversation had already become a battle. For an allusion to the better condition of the roads in a neighbouring division appeared to be the sequel to unsuccessful attempts at getting constructed in *Lebak* also such better roads, or having the existing ones kept in better repair. But in this respect the Regent was right, *Pandeglang* was more densely populated, especially in proportion to its much smaller area, and therefore the labour on the main roads, with united forces, was much lighter than in *Lebak*, a division which, covering some hundreds of square miles, had only seventy thousand inhabitants.

"That is true," said Verbrugge, "we have only a small number of people here, but . . ."

The *Adhipatti* looked at him as though expecting an attack. He knew that after this "but" something might follow that would sound unpleasant to him, who had been Regent of *Lebak* for thirty years. It appeared, however, that for the moment Verbrugge had no inclination to continue the battle. At any rate he broke off the conversation, and again asked the *mandoor*-orderly whether he saw no one coming.

"I see nothing yet in the direction of *Pandeglang*, Sir, but yonder from the opposite side comes someone on horseback . . . it is the *toowan commendaan*."¹

"Quite right, *Dongso*," said Verbrugge, looking out, "that is the commandant! He is hunting about here, and went out early this morning. Eh! *Duclari* . . . *Duclari*!"

"He has heard you, Sir, he is coming this way. His boy is riding after him, with a *kidang*² behind him on the horse."

"*Pegang koodahnya toowan commendaan*,"³ was Verbrugge's

¹ Lord Commandant.

² Small deer.

³ "Go and hold the horse of the Lord Commandant."

order to one of the servants crouching outside. "Morning, Duclari! Are you wet? What is the bag? Come in!"

A vigorous-looking man of about thirty, sturdy and soldierly in appearance, although there was not a vestige of uniform about him, entered the *pendoppo*. It was Lieutenant Duclari, commandant of the small garrison of *Rangkas-Betoong*. Verbrugge and he were friends, and their intimacy was the greater as, for some time already, Duclari had been staying at Verbrugge's house, while awaiting the completion of a new fortress. He shook hands with his host, saluted the Regent courteously, and sat down with the question: "Well, what things have you got?"

"Will you take tea, Duclari?"

"No, thanks, I am already warm enough! Haven't you any coco-nut milk? That's fresher."

"I shall not let them give you any. When one is warm, coco-nut milk is, I think, very bad. It makes one stiff and rheumatic. Just look at the coolies who carry heavy loads across the mountains: they keep themselves alert and supple by drinking hot water, or *koppee dahoon*. But *ginger tea* is still better." . . .

"What? *Koppee dahoon*, tea made of coffee-leaves? I've never seen that."

"That's because you have not lived in Sumatra. There it is quite the custom."

"Very well, give me tea then . . . but not made of coffee-leaves or ginger. Oh, yes, you have lived in Sumatra, and so has the new Assistant-Resident, hasn't he?"

This conversation was carried on in Dutch, which language the Regent did not understand. Whether Duclari felt that there was some discourtesy in thus keeping him outside the discourse, or whether he had some other reason, he suddenly continued in Malay, addressing the Regent.

"Do you know, *Adhipatti*, that Mr. Verbrugge knows the new Assistant-Resident?"

"No, no!" interrupted Verbrugge, "that is not what I said, for I have never seen him. He served in Sumatra some years before me. I only told you that I heard a good deal about him there, nothing more!"

"Well, that comes to the same thing. One need not exactly see a man to know him. What do you think about it, *Adhipatti*?"

The *Adhipatti* just wanted to call a servant. A moment passed, therefore, before he could say: "I agree with you, Commandant, but still in many cases it is necessary to see a person before you can form an opinion about him."

"This may be true in general," Duclari now went on in Dutch — either because he was more familiar with that language, and considered that he had done enough to satisfy the requirements of courtesy, or because he wished to be understood by Verbrugge alone — "this may be true in general, but with regard to Havelaar — one certainly doesn't require a personal acquaintance . . . he is a fool!"

"I never said that, Duclari!"

"No, you did not say it, but I do, after all you have told me about him. I call a man who jumps into the water to save a dog from sharks, a fool."

"Well, of course, it was not sensible. But . . ."

"And just look here, that bit of poetry against General Vandamme . . . that wasn't right!"

"It was witty . . ."

"Admitted! But a young man has no business to be witty at the expense of a general."

"Don't forget that he was still very young . . . it is fourteen years ago. He was only twenty-two then."

"And then the turkey he stole!"

"That was to annoy the general."

"Exactly! A young man has no business to annoy a general, who, in addition, was in this case, as civil governor, his chief. The other bit of verse I thought amusing, but . . . those everlasting duels!"

"That was usually in defence of someone else. He always took the side of the weaker."

"Well, let everyone fight duels for himself, if one is determined to do so! As for me, I consider that duels are rarely necessary. If unavoidable, I should be prepared to accept a challenge, and in certain cases even be the challenger, but to make that sort of thing an everyday business . . . no, thanks! Let us hope he may have changed in that respect."

"O, certainly, there is no doubt of that! He is so much older now, and then he has been married for years, and Assistant-Resident for quite a long time. Besides, I always heard it said that he had a kind heart, and a warm corner in it for justice."

"Well, that will stand him in good stead in *Lebak*! Something has just happened to me that . . . do you think the Regent understands us?"

"I don't think so. But show me something out of your bag, then he will think it is that which we are talking about."

Duclari took his game bag, drew from it a couple of wood-pigeons, and feeling those birds as though he was talking about shooting, he told Verbrugge that only a moment ago a Javanese had run after him and asked him whether he could do nothing to lighten the burdens laid upon the population.

"And," he continued, "this is very serious, Verbrugge! Not that I am astonished at the thing itself. I have been long enough in *Bantam* to know what happens here; but that a Javanese from among the populace, who is usually so cautious and reticent as regards his chiefs, asks such a thing from a person who is in no way directly concerned with it, this seems amazing to me!"

"And what did you answer?"

"Well, I said it was not my business! I told him to go to you, or to the new Assistant-Resident, when he should have arrived at *Rangkas-Betoong*, and lay his complaints there."

"*Eenee apa toowan toowan-datang!*"¹ called suddenly the orderly *Dongso*. "I see a *mantree* who is waving his *toodoong*."²

¹ "The gentlemen are just coming!"

² Large hat.

All rose. Duclari, who did not wish his presence in the *pendoppo* to be interpreted as if he also were on the boundary to welcome the Assistant-Resident, the latter being, though his superior, not his chief, and moreover "a fool," Duclari mounted his horse and rode away, followed by his servant.

The *Adhipatti* and Verbrugge placed themselves at the entrance of the *pendoppo*, and saw a travelling-coach coming which was drawn by four horses, and which, pretty well covered with mud, presently stopped near the little bamboo building.

It would have been difficult to guess all that the coach contained, before *Dongso*, assisted by the "runners" and a number of servants belonging to the retinue of the Regent, had unfastened all the straps and knots that held the carriage enclosed with a black leather covering, reminding one of the caution with which in earlier days lions and tigers were brought into a town, when the zoological gardens were still travelling menageries. Now there were no lions and tigers in the coach. The only reason why everything had been so carefully closed up was the west monsoon, which compelled one to be ready for rain. To descend from a travelling-coach in which one has for a long time jolted along the road, is not so easy as people who have never or rarely travelled in one might imagine. More or less as is the case with the poor prehistoric *Saurians*, which by dint of waiting long enough have at last come to form an integral portion of the clay wherein originally they had not taken up their abode with any intention of remaining, so also, with travellers who have sat too long in a travelling-coach, closely packed and in a cramped position, something takes place that I propose to call *assimilation*. One finally no longer knows precisely where the leather cushion of the carriage ends, and where the ego begins; in fact the idea has sometimes occurred to me that in such a coach one might have a toothache or a cramp which one might mistake for moth-holes in the cloth or *vice versa*.

There are few circumstances in the material world that do not give thinking Man occasion to make observations on the intellec-

tual plane; and I have often asked myself whether many errors that among men have the force of law, many crooked notions that we mistake for rectitude, might possibly result from the fact that men have too long sat with the same company in the same travelling-coach. The leg which you had to push out to the left between the hat-box and the basket of cherries . . . the knee you held pressed against the carriage door, so that the lady opposite might not think you intended an attack on crinoline or virtue . . . the foot with corns that was so frightened of the heels of the commercial traveller next to you . . . the neck you were so long compelled to turn to the left because there was a drip on the right of you . . . all these, you see, must in the end become necks, knees, and feet that have something distorted about them. I think it is a good thing now and then to change carriages or seats or fellow passengers. It enables one to turn one's neck in another direction, one can from time to time move one's knee, and perhaps sometimes for a change one may have next to one a lady with dancing shoes, or a little boy whose short legs do not reach the floor. It gives one a better chance of seeing straight and walking upright as soon as one has once more the solid ground under one's feet.

Now I do not know whether in the coach which stopped in front of the *pendoppo* there was anything that opposed the "solution of continuity," but there is no doubt that it took a long time before anything emerged from it. It seemed that a battle of courtesies was going on. One heard the words: "If you please, Mrs. Havelaar!" and "Resident!" However, at last a gentleman descended, who both in bearing and appearance showed a suggestion of the Saurians I spoke about just now. As we shall see him again, I may as well tell you at once that his immobility could not exclusively be attributed to assimilation with the travelling-coach, for, even when there was no carriage anywhere near for miles, he still displayed a calmness, a slowness, and a cautiousness, which would make many a Saurian envious, and which in the eyes of a large number of people are the hallmarks of gentility, of composure, and

of wisdom. He was, like most Europeans in India, very pale, which, however, in those regions is in no way considered as evidence of unsatisfactory health, and he had delicate features which bore testimony to some intellectual training. Only there was something cold in his glance, something that reminded one of a table of logarithms, and though in general his appearance was in no way unpleasant or repellent, one could not refrain from the suspicion that his rather large thin nose felt bored in that face where so little happened.

He offered his hand courteously to a lady, assisting her to alight from the carriage, and when she had taken a child, a little fair boy of about three, from a gentleman still inside, they entered the *pendoppo*. After them came the second gentleman just referred to, and with people acquainted with Java it would have attracted notice that he waited at the carriage door to make the descent easier to an old Javanese *baboo*. Three servants had themselves managed to get free from the patent leather box that was stuck on to the back of the coach like a young oyster to the back of its mamma.

The gentleman who had descended first had offered his hand to the Regent and to Verbrugge, and they had taken it respectfully; their whole demeanour had made it apparent that they felt themselves in the presence of an important personage. He was the Resident of *Bantam*, the extensive region of which *Lebak* is a division, a regency, or, as it is called officially, an *assistant-residency*.

In reading fictitious stories I have often felt irritated by the little respect the authors paid to the public's good taste, and this was especially the case whenever they manifested the wish to produce something that was to be considered amusing or burlesque, not to say *humorous*, a quality which people almost invariably confuse with the *comical*. They introduce a person speaking, who either does not understand the language or pronounces it badly; for instance one makes a Frenchman say: "I sink ze sree soroughfares are all srown open," or "ze vidow vants to vait for a vidover." In the absence of a Frenchman, one takes someone who stammers, or

one "creates" a person who makes a hobby of a couple of ever-returning words. I have seen a perfectly idiotic vaudeville "make a hit" because there was a man in it who kept repeating: "My name is Meyer." Such wit is just a bit cheap, and to tell you the truth, I should be angry with you if you could find it amusing.

But now it is my misfortune that I myself have to put something like this before you. From time to time I have to make someone "walk on" — I will promise to do it as little as possible — who indeed had a style of speech which I fear will draw upon me the suspicion of an abortive effort at making you laugh. And I must therefore most emphatically assure you that it is not *my* fault, if the eminently important-looking Resident of *Bantam*, who is here referred to, had something so very peculiar in his mode of speaking that I find it difficult to reproduce it without the appearance of seeking an effect of wit in a stage trick. He expressed himself in such a way as to give the idea that there was a full stop after each word, or even a prolonged rest, and I can compare the space between his words with nothing better than the silence that succeeds the "amen" after a long prayer in the church, which, as everyone knows, is a signal that one has permission to move in one's seat, or cough, or blow one's nose. What he said was usually well considered, and if he could have broken himself of the habit of these untimely resting-points, his sentences, at any rate from a rhetorical point of view, would mostly have appeared quite sound. But all this crumbling up, this jerkiness and unevenness rendered it irksome to listen to him. And often it made one stumble. For usually, when one had begun to answer under the amiable impression that the sentence was finished, and that he left the completion of the part omitted to the sagacity of his audience, the still missing words would come along behind like the stragglers of a defeated army, and made you feel that you had interrupted him, which is always a disagreeable experience. The public of the chief centre, *Serang*, in so far as they were not in government service — a position which gives the majority an air of caution — described his

discourses as "slimy." I don't consider this a tasteful word, but am bound to admit that it expressed the chief characteristic of the Resident's eloquence pretty accurately.

I have said nothing yet about Max Havelaar and his wife — for these were the two persons who got out of the coach with their child and the *baboo*, after the Resident — and it might be sufficient to leave the description of their appearance and character to the course of events and the reader's own imagination. As, however, I have now started to describe, I will tell you that Mrs. Havelaar was not beautiful, but that in look and speech she had something very sweet, and that by the easy freedom of her manners she gave unmistakable evidence of having moved in the world, and of belonging to the higher classes of society. She had none of the stiffness and unpleasingness of middle-class gentility which, in order to pass as "distinguished," imagines it must needs aggravate itself and others with shyness; also she attached but little importance to the appearances that seem to have a certain value for most women. In her dress she was a pattern of simplicity. A white *baadjoo* of muslin with a blue wrapper — I believe in Europe one would call a garment of this kind a *peignoir* — completed her travelling costume. Round her neck she wore a thin silk cord, to which were attached two small medallions, unseen however, as they were concealed in the folds that covered her breast. For the remainder, her hair *à la chinoise*, and a small spray of *melatti*¹ in her *kondeh*² . . . such was her complete toilet.

I said she was not beautiful, and yet I should not like you to think her the reverse. I trust you will think her beautiful as soon as I shall have had the opportunity of representing her, burning with indignation about that which she called the "neglect of genius," when her adored Max was concerned, or when she was animated by a thought connected with the well-being of her child. It has too often been said that the face is the mirror of the soul, for any one to value the portrait-beauty of a face whose immo-

¹ Javanese flower.

² Hair-knot.

bility mirrors nothing because no soul is reflected in it. Let me say, then, that *she* had a beautiful soul, and one must have been blind not also to consider beautiful the face in which that soul might be read.

Havelaar was a man of thirty-five. He was slim, and alert in his movements. There was nothing remarkable in his appearance except his short and mobile upper lip and his large pale blue eyes, which, when he was in a calm mood, looked dreamy, but which shot fire when a great idea took possession of him. His fair hair hung smoothly over his temples, and I quite understand that few people, seeing him for the first time, would get the impression that they had met a man who, as regards both head and heart, belonged to the rare ones of the earth. He was a "vessel of contradictions." Keen as a stiletto, yet gentle as a young girl, he himself was always the first to feel the wound his bitter words had inflicted, and he suffered more from it than the injured one. He was quick to understand; he grasped at once what was highest and most complicated; he delighted in solving difficult problems, and gladly devoted to this task labour and study, and intense exertions; . . . and yet often he could not understand the simplest thing, which a child might have explained to him. Full of the love of truth and justice, he often neglected his nearest and most obvious duty, in order to redress a wrong that lay higher, farther, or deeper, and that allured him by the probable need for greater effort in the struggle. He was chivalrous and brave, but often, like the other Don Quixote, wasted his valour on a windmill. He burned with insatiable ambition, which made all ordinary distinction among his fellow men appear to him worthless, and yet he placed his greatest happiness in a calm and obscure home-life. A poet in the highest conception of the word, he dreamt solar systems in a spark, peopled them with beings of his own creation, felt himself lord of a world he himself had called into existence . . . yet could perfectly well immediately after carry on, without the slightest dreaminess, a discourse on the price of food, the rules of

grammar, or the economic advantages of an Egyptian poultry-farm. No science was wholly foreign to him. He presurmised what he did not know, and he possessed in a high degree the faculty of applying the little he knew — everyone knows but little, and he, though perhaps knowing more than some others, was no exception to this rule — applying the little he knew in a manner which multiplied the measure of his knowledge. He was strict and orderly, and with it unusually patient, but precisely so because strictness, order and patience were naturally difficult to him, as his mind had a tendency to the fanciful. He was slow and circumspect in forming an opinion, although this scarcely seemed so to those who heard him so hastily expressing his conclusions. His impressions were too vivid for people to look upon them as enduring, and yet he often proved that they were so. All that was great and exalted drew him, and at the same time he was simple and naïve as a child. He was honest, especially where honesty ran into magnanimity, and would leave unpaid hundreds that he owed, because he had given away thousands. He was witty and entertaining when he felt that his wit was understood, but otherwise distant and reserved. Warm-hearted with his friends, he made — sometimes too readily — friends of all that suffered. He was sensitive to love and affection . . . faithful to his word once given . . . weak in small things, but firm to stubbornness where he deemed it worth while to show character . . . modest and gracious with those who recognized his mental superiority, but difficult when people attempted to dispute it . . . candid out of pride, and reticent by fits, when he feared that his candour might be taken for stupidity . . . equally susceptible to sensual as to mental pleasure . . . timorous and ill-spoken when he thought he was not understood, but eloquent when he felt that his words fell into receptive soil . . . sluggish when he was not urged by any spur from his own soul, but zealous, fiery and resolute when he was so urged . . . furthermore, he was affable, refined in manner, and irreproachable in his conduct: such, approximately, was Havelaar!

I say: approximately. For if all definitions are difficult in themselves, this becomes even more so when it is a question of describing a person who deviates greatly from the everyday norm. And no doubt this is the reason why novelists usually make their heroes devils or angels. Black or white is easy to paint, but far more difficult is the exact reproduction of the shades that lie between, when one is bound by the truth, and may therefore make the colours neither too dark nor too light. I feel that the sketch I have tried to give of Havelaar is entirely incomplete. The materials before me are so divergent in nature that by their excess of wealth they hamper my judgment; and probably, therefore, while unfolding the events I wish to relate, I shall revert to them for their completion. This is certain, he was an uncommon man, and well worth the trouble of studying. Already now I notice that I have neglected to give, as one of his principal traits, that he grasped the ludicrous and the serious side of things with the same rapidity and at the same time, from which characteristic his mode of speech derived, without his knowing it, a kind of *humour*, leaving his audience in continual doubt as to whether they had been struck by the deep feeling that animated his words, or whether they had to laugh about the absurdity which all of a sudden interrupted their earnestness.

It was remarkable that his appearance, and even his emotions, showed so few traces of the things he had gone through in his life. Boasting of one's experience has become a ridiculous commonplace. There are people who for fifty or sixty years have drifted along with the little stream wherein they have pretended to swim, and who can tell little else of all this time than that they moved from the A-quay to the B-street. Nothing is of more usual occurrence than to hear people pride themselves on their experience, and especially those people who have obtained their white hair very easily. Others again think they may found their claims to experience on real vicissitudes undergone, although it does not appear from anything that those changes gripped them in their soul-life.

I can imagine that to be present at, or even to undergo, important events has little or no influence on a certain type of disposition, unequipped with the capacity for receiving and digesting impressions. If anyone doubt this, let him ask himself whether he would be justified in ascribing experience to all the inhabitants of France who were forty or fifty in 1815. And yet all of these were persons who not only had seen the stupendous drama that began with 1789 staged, but who had even taken part in that drama in some more or less weighty rôle.

And, *vice versa*, how many undergo a series of emotions without the outward circumstances appearing to give occasion for it! One may remember the Crusoe novels, Silvio Pellico's *Captivity*, Saintine's charming *Picciola*, the struggle in the breast of an "old maid" who all her life long hugged one love without ever betraying by one single word what went on in her heart, or finally, the emotions of a humanitarian who, without externally being concerned in the course of events, nevertheless takes a burning interest in the well-being of his fellow citizens or fellow men. One may imagine how that humanitarian hopes and fears alternately, how he watches every change, how he *enthuses* over a beautiful idea, and burns with indignation when he sees it pushed out of the way and trampled upon by the many who, for a moment at any rate, are stronger than beautiful ideas. One may think of the philosopher who, from the seclusion of his cell, tries to teach the people what is truth, when he has to experience that his voice is drowned by the clatter of pietistic hypocrisy or gain-hunting quackery. One may picture Socrates — not while drinking the cup of hemlock, for I wish to refer to the experience of the soul, not that which comes direct from external circumstances — how deeply grieved his heart must have been when he, who strove to find truth and goodness, heard himself called "a corrupter of youth and reviler of the gods."

Or even better: one may think of Jesus when so sadly gazing upon Jerusalem, and lamenting that her people "would not" take heed.

So bitter a cry of grief — before the poisoned cup or the cross-tree — comes not from an unpierced heart. There it is that suffering has been, great suffering; there is the true *experience*!

This philippic has escaped me . . . well, it is down, and will stay. Havelaar had experienced much. Shall I give you something that may balance the removal from the "A-quay"? He had been shipwrecked more than once. In his diary there were fire, rebellion, assassination, war, duels, luxury, poverty, hunger, cholera, love and "loves." He had visited many lands, and had intercourse with people of every kind of race, rank, customs, prejudices, religion, and colour.

Therefore, as regards the circumstances of life, he *could* have experienced much. And that he had really experienced much, that he had not gone through life without *seizing* the impressions that it offered him so bountifully — for this the alertness of his mind might go bail, as well as the receptiveness of his heart.

Now it filled with amazement all those who knew or could guess how much he had witnessed and gone through, that so little of it was to be read in his face. Doubtless there was in his features something like weariness, but this rather suggested premature growth than approaching age — and yet it should have been approaching age, for in India a man of thirty-five is no longer young.

As I have said, even his emotions had remained young. He could play with a child, and like a child, and often he complained that "little Max" was still too young to fly kites, as he, "big Max," was so fond of it. With boys he would play at leap-frog, and he delighted in drawing patterns for the girls' fancy work. He would even take the needle out of their hand to amuse himself with such work, although he often said they might be doing something better than "mechanically counting stitches." With young men of eighteen he was a young student who gladly joined them in singing "*Patriam canimus*" or "*Gaudeamus igitur*" . . . ay, I am not quite certain whether shortly since, when he was on furlough in Amsterdam, he had not pulled down a signboard that displeased him, because on it was painted a Negro chained at the feet

of a European with a long pipe in his mouth, and underneath the inevitable words: "*The smoking young merchant.*"

The *baboo* whom he had assisted out of the coach resembled all the other *baboo*s in India when they are old. If you know this type of servant, I need not tell you what she looked like. And if you do not know it, I cannot tell you. Only this there was to distinguish her from other nurse-maids in India, that she had very little to do. For Mrs. Havelaar was a pattern of care for her child, and whatever had to be done for or with little Max, she did herself, to the great astonishment of many other ladies who did not approve of one being "a slave to one's children."



CHAPTER VII

THE Resident of *Bantam* introduced the Regent and the Controller to the new Assistant-Resident. Havelaar spoke to both officials some courteous words of greeting. He made the Controller feel at ease — there is always something unpleasant in meeting a new chief — by addressing him cordially, as if he wished at once to introduce a more or less familiar tone, which would smooth the path of official intercourse. His meeting with the Regent was such as was due to a person who carried the gilt *payong*,¹ but who at the same time was to be his *younger brother*. With courtly affability, he chid him for his too zealous dutifulness, which in such weather had made him come to the border of his division, for, strictly speaking, according to the rule of etiquette, the Regent need not have done this.

“Really, *Adhipatti*, I am cross with you for having gone to such trouble on my behalf! I had only expected to meet you at *Rangkas-Betoong*.”

“I wished to meet the Assistant-Resident as soon as possible, to become friends,” said the *Adhipatti*.

“Certainly, certainly, I feel greatly honoured! But I do not like to see one of your rank and years over-exerting himself. And that on horseback, too!”

“Yes, Mr. Havelaar! When the Service calls, I am still alert and strong.”

“Ah, but this would have been expecting too much of you! Wouldn’t it, Resident?”

“The *Adhipatti*. Is. Very. . . .”

“True, but there are limits.”

¹ Sunshade.

"Zealous," drawled the Resident behind.

"True, but there are limits," Havelaar had to repeat, as if by way of eating his previous words. "If you approve, Resident, we'll make room in the carriage. The *baboo* can stay here, and we'll send a palanquin for her from *Rangkas-Betoong*. My wife will take Max in her lap . . . won't you, Tine? And so there will be enough room."

"I. Have. No. . . ."

"Verbrugge, we'll give you a passage also; I don't see . . ."

"Objection!" said the Resident.

"I don't see why you should slush through the mud on horseback . . . there is room enough for all of us. In this way we can at once make each other's acquaintance. What say you, Tine, we'll manage perfectly, shan't we? Here, Max . . . look, Verbrugge, isn't he a fine little man! That's my young son . . . that's Max!"

The Resident had seated himself in the *pendoppo* with the *Ad-hipatti*. Havelaar called Verbrugge, whom he wished to ask whose was the piebald with the red saddle-cloth. But when Verbrugge went to the entrance of the *pendoppo*, to see which horse he meant, Havelaar laid his hand on the Controller's shoulder, and asked:

"Is the Regent always so dutiful?"

"He is a stalwart man for his years, Mr. Havelaar, and you will understand that he naturally wants to make a good impression on you."

"Yes, I understand. I have heard much good of him . . . he is refined, isn't he?"

"Oh yes. . . ."

"And he has a large family?"

Verbrugge looked at Havelaar as if he did not understand this transition. And this, indeed, was often difficult for those who did not know Havelaar. The alertness of his mind often made him drop some links of the chain of reasoning in a conversation, and though this transition was quite gradual in *his* thoughts, it surely

could not be a cause for blaming those who were less quick, or who were not used to his quickness, if in such a case they stared at him with the unspoken question on their lips: "Are you mad . . . or what is the matter?"

Something like this showed itself in the expression of Verbrugge's face, and Havelaar had to repeat the question, before the Controller answered:

"Yes, he has a very large family."

"And are there *Medjeets*¹ being built in the division?" continued Havelaar, again in a tone which, in contradiction with the words themselves, seemed to indicate a connection between those *mosques* and the "large family" of the Regent.

Verbrugge answered that undoubtedly there was a good deal of labour being applied to mosques.

"Yes, yes, I knew it!" exclaimed Havelaar. "And just tell me, now, whether there are considerable arrears in the payments of land-rent."

"Yes, they might be better."

"Exactly! and especially in the district of *Parang Koodyang*," said Havelaar, as though it were easier for him to answer his own questions. "What is the estimate for the current year?" he continued, and noticing that Verbrugge hesitated a little, as if reflecting upon his answer, Havelaar forestalled him, continuing as in one breath:

"Right, right, I know it already . . . eighty-six thousand and a few hundred . . . fifteen thousand more than last year . . . but only six thousand above '55. Since '53 we have only advanced eight thousand . . . also, the population is very thin . . . yes, of course, Malthus! In twelve years we have only risen eleven per cent, and this is still questionable, for the earlier censuses were very inaccurate . . . and they are still! From '50 to '51 there is even retrogression. And also the live-stock figures are not progressing . . . that's a bad sign, Verbrugge! The deuce! look at

¹ Mosques.

that horse capering! I believe that it has the staggers . . . come and look, Max!"

Verbrugge realized that he would not have to teach the new Assistant-Resident much, and that there was no question of superiority through "local seniority," which, however, it is only right to say, the good fellow had not desired.

"But it is natural," continued Havelaar, taking Max in his arms. "At *Tjekandi* and *Bolang* they are very glad of it. And so are the rebels in the *Lampongs*. I reckon on your hearty co-operation, Mr. Verbrugge! The Regent is a man of advanced years, so we must . . . just tell me, is his son-in-law still District-Chief? Considering everything, I take him to be a man deserving of tolerant treatment . . . I mean the Regent. I am very glad that everything here is so backward and poverty-stricken, and . . . I hope to be here a long time."

Saying this he shook hands with Verbrugge, who, returning to the table where the Resident, the *Adhipatti*, and Mrs. Havelaar were seated, realized already a little better than five minutes earlier that "Havelaar was not such a fool" as the Commandant believed. Verbrugge was in no way wanting in intelligence, and he, knowing the division *Lebak* about as thoroughly as so extensive a region, where nothing is printed, *can* be known by *one* person, began to see that after all there was a connection between the seemingly disconnected questions of Havelaar, and also that the new Assistant-Resident, although he had never before set foot in the division, knew something of the things that were going on there. It is true, he still did not understand that gladness about the poverty in *Lebak*, but he persuaded himself that he had misunderstood that expression. Afterwards, however, when Havelaar frequently repeated the same statement, he saw how much goodness and nobility there was in that joy.

Havelaar and Verbrugge sat down at the table, and talking about trivial matters during tea, they waited till Dongso came to tell the Resident that the fresh horses were put in. The travellers

packed themselves into the carriage as comfortably as possible, and the company drove away. The jolting and shaking made conversation difficult. Little Max was kept good with *pesang*,¹ and his mother, who held him in her lap, would absolutely not admit that she was tired, when Havelaar offered to take the heavy child. During a moment of enforced rest in a mud-hole, Verbrugge asked the Resident whether he had already spoken to the new Assistant-Resident about Mrs. Slotering.

"Mister Havelaar. Has said . . ."

"Certainly, Verbrugge, why not? The lady can stay with us. I should not like . . ."

"That. It. Was. All right," the Resident dragged out with a great effort.

"I should not like to deny the use of my house to a lady in her circumstances! A thing like that speaks for itself . . . doesn't it, Tine?"

Tine also considered that it spoke for itself.

"You have two houses at *Rangkas-Betoong*," said Verbrugge. "There is room and to spare for two families."

"But even if it were not so . . ."

"I. Dared. Not. Promise . . ."

"Well, Resident!" exclaimed Mrs. Havelaar, "there is no doubt about it!"

"It. Her. For. It. Is . . ."

"Even if there were ten of them, so long as they were willing to make the best of things."

"A. Great. Inconvenience. And. She. Is . . ."

"But travelling in her condition is an impossibility, Resident!"

A violent jerk of the carriage, as it became de-mudded, placed an exclamation mark after Tine's assertion that travelling was an impossibility for Mrs. Slotering. Everyone had uttered the usual "I say!" that follows such a jerk. Max had found in the lap of his mother the *pesang* he had lost through the jolt, and they were

¹ Bananas.

already quite a distance nearer the mudhole that was to come next, before the Resident was able to conclude his sentence by adding:

. . . "A. Native. Woman."

"Oh, that's all the same," Mrs. Havelaar tried to make him understand. The Resident nodded, as if intending to say that he was glad the matter was thus settled, and as the conversation presented such difficulties, they dropped it.

The Mrs. Slotering referred to was the widow of Havelaar's predecessor, who had died two months before. Verbrugge, who thereupon had been provisionally charged with the function of Assistant-Resident, would have been entitled to occupy during that time the spacious residence which at *Rangkas-Betoong*, as in every division, had been erected by the Government for the person there in authority. He had, however, not done so, partly perhaps from fear that he would have to move again too soon, and partly to leave the use of it to the lady and her children. All the same, there would have been room enough, for in addition to the fairly large Assistant-Residency there was next to it, in the same grounds, another house, which had formerly served the same purpose, and which, though somewhat in disrepair, was still perfectly fit to live in.

Mrs. Slotering had asked the Resident to speak for her to the successor of her husband, to obtain his permission for her to live in the old house until after her confinement, which she expected in a few months. It was this request which Havelaar and his wife had so readily conceded, as entirely in accordance with their natural disposition to the most liberal hospitality and eagerness to help.

We have heard the Resident say that Mrs. Slotering was a "native woman." This remark requires some elucidation for the non-Indian reader, who might readily and wrongly conclude that the allusion was to a full-blooded Javanese.

European Society in Netherlands India is rather sharply divided into two sections: the true Europeans, and those who — although legally living in the enjoyment of absolutely the same full rights —

were not born in Europe, and have more or less "native" blood in their veins. In justice to the conceptions of humanity in India, I hasten to add that, however sharp the line which in social life is drawn between the two classes of persons who for the natives bear equally the name of *Hollander*, this division is in no way marked by the barbaric character which is found in the American distinction of status. I cannot deny that even so there is still much in the mutual relation which is unjust and painful, and that the word *lip-lap* (half-caste) has often sounded in my ear as proof of the distance which as yet separates many a non-half-caste, or "white" person, from true civilization. It is true that the half-caste is only in exceptional cases admitted into European company, and that usually, if I may here adopt a very familiar expression, he is not accepted as full-blown, but not many people would represent and defend such exclusion or contempt as a *just principle*. Everyone is of course at liberty to choose his own entourage and company, and one cannot rightly blame the complete European for preferring intercourse with people of his own breeding to that with persons who — leaving alone their greater or lesser value from a moral or intellectual point of view — do not share his impressions and ideas, or — and this, in a presumed difference of *culture*, is perhaps very often the chief thing — whose *prejudices have taken another direction* than his own.

A *lip-lap* — to be more polite I suppose I should have to say a "so-called native child"; but I beg leave to adhere to the idiom which seems to be born of alliteration; I mean nothing offensive by its use: why should it be offensive? — a *lip-lap* may have many good qualities. The European also may have many good qualities. Both have many that are bad, and in this also they resemble each other. But the good and the bad qualities of both are too divergent to permit of their intercourse being as a rule mutually satisfactory. Besides — and for this the Government is largely responsible — the *lip-lap* is often badly educated. Now the point is not what the European would be like if his mental development had been

hampered from youth, but that doubtless in general the slender scientific equipment of the *lip-lap* hinders his being placed on an equality with the European even when *some lip-lap personally* would perhaps deserve to be ranked above *some* European or another as regards culture or scientific or artistic attainments.

In this also there is nothing new. It was, for instance, part of the policy of William the Conqueror to raise the most insignificant Norman above the most civilized Saxon, and every Norman would appeal to the superiority of the Normans *in general*, in order to assert his personality even where he would have been entirely the inferior *but for* the influence of his race as the ruling party.

Such a state of affairs naturally creates a more or less forced position, which nothing could remove except the better-informed, more broad-minded conceptions and measures of a wise Government.

It is obvious that the European, who in this relationship is on the winning side, feels himself perfectly comfortable in such artificial predominance. But it is often ludicrous enough to hear some person who largely drew his culture and grammar from the Rotterdam *Sandstreet*, laugh at the *lip-lap* because he makes a glass of water or a government masculine, and sun or moon neuter.

A *lip-lap* may be cultured, well-educated, or scholarly — and there are such! — but no sooner has the European who lingered in order to stay away from the ship on which he washed the plates, and who bases his claims to good manners on “’Scuse me” and “How are yer?” risen to the position of head of the commercial venture which made such “huge” profits out of indigo in 1800 odd . . . nay, long before he became owner of the *toko* (booth) in which he sells hams and fowling-pieces — no sooner has this European noticed that the most cultured *lip-lap* even has a difficulty in distinguishing between *h* and *g*, than he sneers at the stupidity of the man who does not know the difference between *hot gas* and *has got*.

But to unlearn that sneer he would have to know that in Arabic

and Malay those consonants are expressed by one letter-symbol, that *Hieronimus* passes through *Geronimo* into *Jerome*, that we make *guano* out of *huano*, that our *hand* fits into a French *gant*, that a Dutch *kous* is an English *hose*, and that for *Guild Heaume* we say in Dutch *Hooillem* or *Willem*. So much erudition cannot of course be expected from a man who made his fortune "in" indigo, and who extracted his culture from the success of gambling . . . or worse!

And naturally such Europeans cannot be expected to be hail-fellow-well-met with a *lip-lap*!

I, however, understand how *Willem* originates in *Guillaume*, and I must admit that especially in the Moluccas I have often met "*lip-laps*" who amazed me by the extent of their knowledge, and who suggested to me that we Europeans, in spite of all the resources at our disposal, often — and not merely by comparison — are far behind the poor pariahs who from the cradle struggle with artificially unjust setbacks and with the silly prejudice against their colour.

But Mrs. Slotering was once and for all safeguarded against mistakes in Dutch, as she never spoke anything but Malay. We shall have a look at her later, when we take tea with Havelaar, Tine, and little Max in the colonnade of the assistant-residency at *Rangkas-Betoong*, where our travellers, after endless jolting and jerking, arrived at last safely.

The Resident, who had only come to install the new Assistant-Resident in his office, expressed his wish to return the same day to *Serang*:

Because. He . . .

Havelaar also expressed his readiness to lose no time. . . .

Was. "So. Very. Busy."

. . . and the arrangement was made that within half an hour they would meet for the purpose in the spacious colonnade of the Regent's residence. Verbrugge, who had anticipated this, had several days before instructed the District-Chiefs, the *Patteh*, the

Klewon, the *Dyaksa*,¹ the Tax Collector, some *mantrees*, and further all the Indian officials who were to attend this function, to assemble at the head-centre.

The *Adhipatti* took leave, and rode home. Mrs. Havelaar looked over her new residence, and was very pleased with it, especially because the garden was a large one, which seemed to her a fine thing for little Max, who should be much in the open. The Resident and Havelaar had repaired to their rooms to change, for, at the solemn function which was to take place, the officially prescribed uniform appeared to be requisite. Round about the house there were hundreds of people, who had either accompanied the Resident's carriage on horseback, or belonged to the retinue of the summoned chiefs. The police- and office-orderlies walked busily to and fro. In short, everything showed that the monotony of existence on this forgotten spot in the west end of Java was for a moment interrupted by a little life.

Soon the handsome carriage of the *Adhipatti* drove into the courtyard. The Resident and Havelaar, glittering with gold and silver, but now and then stumbling over their swords, took their seats, and moved on to the residence of the Regent, where they were received with music of *gongs* and *gamlangs*. Verbrugge, who had changed his bespattered costume, was already there. The lesser chiefs sat in a wide circle, on mats on the floor, in accordance with the Eastern custom, and at the end of the long colonnade there was a table, at which the Resident, the *Adhipatti*, the Assistant-Resident, the Controller, and six chiefs seated themselves. Tea and pastry were served, and the simple function started.

The Resident rose, and read out the order of the Governor-General by which Max Havelaar was appointed Assistant-Resident of the division *Bantan-Kedool* or South-Bantam, as *Lebak* is called by the natives. Then he took the Government Gazette containing the oath prescribed for the assumption of offices in general, which states: "*that, in order to be nominated or promoted to the office of*

¹ Native chiefs exercising different government functions.

——, *one has promised or given nothing to anyone, nor will promise or give anything; that one will be loyal and faithful to His Majesty the King of the Netherlands; obedient to His Majesty's representative in the Indian Dominions; that one will strictly follow and cause to be followed the laws and orders given or to be given, and that in everything one will behave as becomes a good . . . (in this case: Assistant-Resident)."*

This of course was followed by the sacramental: "*So help me God Almighty.*"

Havelaar repeated the words as they were read out. Properly speaking it should have been considered as *part* of this oath that one promised: *to protect the native population against exploitation and oppression.* For, in swearing that one would maintain the existing laws and orders, one had only to cast a glance at the numerous injunctions to that effect, in order to see that a special oath for this purpose was in reality quite superfluous. But the legislator seems to have considered that of a good thing one cannot have too much, for a separate oath is required of the Assistant-Residents, which once more specially emphasizes this obligation towards the inferior people. Havelaar therefore had once more to take "*God Almighty*" as his witness to the promise: that he "*would protect the native population against oppression, ill-treatment, and extortion.*"

To a keen observër it would have been worth while noticing the difference between the attitude and tone of the Resident and of Havelaar on this occasion. Both had attended similar functions more than once. The difference to which I allude, therefore, was not caused by one or the other being more or less struck by the novelty or the unusual character of the scene, but was wholly due to the divergence of the characters and conceptions of these two persons. It is true, the Resident spoke slightly faster than usual, as he had only to read the Order and the oaths, which saved him the trouble of having to look for his final words; but, nevertheless, everything on his part was done with a stateliness and solemnity

which must have impressed the superficial onlooker with a high opinion of the importance he attached to the affair. Havelaar, on the other hand, when with uplifted finger he repeated the oaths, showed something in his face, his voice, and his bearing that seemed to say: "this is self-evident; I should do this even *without God Almighty*." And anyone with some knowledge of human nature would have felt more confidence in his unconstrained manner and seeming indifference than in the official solemnity of the Resident.

For is it not absurd to think that one who is called to administer justice, one in whose hands is placed the happiness or misery of thousands, that such an one should consider himself bound by a few spoken sounds, if, even without those sounds, he did not feel himself impelled to the right by his own heart?

We believe this of Havelaar, that, wherever it might have been his fate to meet the poor or oppressed, he would have protected them, even though he should have promised the contrary by "*Almighty God*."

Then followed an address to the Chiefs by the Resident, who introduced the Assistant-Resident to them as the head of the division, asked them to obey him, to carry out scrupulously their obligations, and more such commonplaces. After this the chiefs were one by one presented by name to Havelaar. He shook hands with each of them, and the "installation" was over.

Dinner was taken at the house of the *Adhipatti*, Commandant Duclari being also invited. Immediately after the meal the Resident, who wished to be at *Serang* again that evening:

Because. He. Was. So. Exceptionally. Busy. . . . re-entered his travelling coach, and *Rangkas-Betoong* returned to the quietude which may be expected at a Java outpost in the interior, where but few Europeans live, and which moreover is not situated on the main road.

The acquaintance between Duclari and Havelaar was soon placed on an easy footing. The *Adhipatti* gave signs of being taken

with his new "elder brother," and shortly afterwards Verbrugge mentioned that the Resident also, whom he had accompanied part of the way back to Serang, had spoken very favourably of the Havelaars, who had spent some days at his house when they passed through on their journey to *Lebak*. He had added that Havelaar, being highly thought of by the Government, would most probably be ere long promoted to a better position, or at least transferred to a more "advantageous" division.

Max and "his Tine" had only recently returned from a voyage to Europe, and felt tired of a "life in boxes," as I once heard it called rather aptly. So they considered themselves lucky, after long wanderings, to live at last again in a spot where they would feel at home. Before their trip to Europe Havelaar had been Assistant-Resident of Amboina, where he had encountered a good many difficulties, as, owing to a series of mistaken measures that had been taken for some time past, the population of that island were in a condition of ferment and rebelliousness. With considerable energy he had succeeded in suppressing this spirit of opposition; but, chagrined by the scant assistance accorded him in this matter by the authorities, and irked by the miserable form of Government which for centuries has depopulated and ruined the glorious land of the Moluccas . . .

If the reader is interested in the subject, let him see what was written thereon as early as 1825 by Baron Van der Capellen, and published by this humanitarian in the Indian Gazette of that year. The condition has by no means improved since that time!

However, Havelaar did at Amboina what was possible and permitted, but the depressing irritation at the lack of support on the part of those whose first duty would have been to assist his efforts had made him ill, and this had induced him to go to Europe on leave. Strictly speaking, on his re-installment he had had a claim on a better choice than the poor and by no means thriving division of *Lebak*, as his sphere of work at Amboina had been of greater importance, and as there, without a Resident over him,

he had depended entirely on himself. Moreover, before he went to Amboina, his elevation to the rank of Resident had already been mooted, and it created some astonishment that he was now charged with the control of a division which paid such small produce emolument, as most people measure the importance of an office by the income attached to it. He himself, however, did not complain of this in the least, for his ambition was not of a nature to make him beg for higher rank or better remuneration.

Yet the latter would have stood him in good stead! For his travels in Europe had absorbed his small savings of former years. He had even left some debts there, and he was, in a word, poor. But he had never looked on his office as primarily a money-business, and on his appointment to *Lebak* he contentedly made up his mind that he would recover his arrears by economy, knowing that his wife, simple in tastes and wants, would gladly assist him in this respect.

But economy was not very easy to Havelaar. For himself he was able to limit his needs to the strictly necessary. Indeed, without the slightest effort he might so restrict himself; but when others required assistance, it was a veritable passion with him to help and to give. He knew this was a weakness; he argued out, with all the common sense he possessed, how *unjust* it was to assist anyone else when he himself had a stronger claim to his own support . . . he felt this injustice still more keenly when also "his Tine" and Max, both of whom he so loved, suffered from the consequences of his liberality . . . he reproached himself for his good nature as a weakness, as vanity, as a craving for masquerading as a prince in disguise . . . he promised himself that he would mend his way, and yet . . . every time someone or other succeeded in presenting himself as a victim of adversity, he forgot all his good intentions in his eagerness to help. And this in spite of the bitter experience of the consequences of this virtue grown into a vice. A week before the birth of little Max he was without the needful wherewith to buy the iron cot that was to hold his

darling, and only a short time before this he had sacrificed the few jewels of his wife for the purpose of coming to the rescue of someone who no doubt was in better circumstances than himself.

But all this was already again far behind them when they arrived at *Lebak*! With cheerful peace of mind they had taken possession of the house: "where at last surely they hoped to stay for some time." With a curious delight they had ordered in Batavia the furniture that was to make everything so comfortable and snug. They showed each other the places where they would breakfast, where little Max would play, where they would have their bookcase, where in the evening he would read to her what he had written during the day, for he was for ever unfolding his ideas on paper . . . and: "some day it would be printed," thought Tine, "and these people would see who her Max was!" But never yet had he sent to the press any of the things that passed through his brain, for he was possessed by a kind of shyness which bore some resemblance to chastity. He himself, at any rate, was unable better to describe this diffidence than by asking those who urged him to publicity: "would *you* send your daughter out into the street without so much as a wrap?"

This, of course, was again reported as one of the many sallies that made people say: "Really that Havelaar is a peculiar man!" And I will not deny the truth of this. But if one had taken the trouble to translate his unusual mode of expression, one would have probably found in the strange question concerning the toilet of a girl the theme for a treatise on the chastity of a mind which is shy of the stare of loutish passers-by, and which would cloak itself in a mantle of virginal timidity.

Yes, they would be happy at *Rangkas-Betoong*, Havelaar and "his Tine"! The only care that still weighed on their minds was that of the debts they had left behind in Europe, added to the expenses still unpaid of the voyage back to India, and to the cost of furnishing their house. But they were not in real need. Would they not live on one-half, nay one-third of his income? Perhaps

also, even probably, he would soon be made a Resident, and then everything would in no time be quite easily arranged.

"Although I should be very sorry, Tine, to leave *Lebak*, for there is much to do here. You must be very economical, sweetheart, then we may be able to pay everything, even without promotion . . . and then I should like to remain here a long time, a very long time!"

This admonition to economy, however, he need not have addressed to her. Truly not *she* was in any way the cause that it had become necessary to be so careful, but she had so entirely identified herself with her Max that she felt the admonition in no way as a reproach, and neither was it. For Havelaar knew but too well that it was only *he* who had failed through his excessive liberality, and that *her* fault — if then a fault could be admitted in her case — had only been her love of Max, which ever approved what he did.

Yes, *she* had approved of his taking two poor women, who lived in *Newstreet* and had never been out of Amsterdam, and who had never "been taken out," round the Haarlem fair, under the amusing pretext that the King had charged him with: "the entertainment of old ladies who led a particularly good life." *She* had approved of his treating the orphans of all the Amsterdam institutions to cake and almond-milk, and loading them with toys. *She* fully understood that he paid the hotel bill for the family of poor singers who wanted to return to their own country, but who did not wish to leave their belongings behind, including the harp and the violin and the bassoon which they needed so badly for their poorly paid trade. *She* could not consider it wrong that he brought to her the girl who had spoken to him in the street one evening . . . that he gave her food and lodging, and did not address to her the all too cheap admonition, "Go thou and sin no more!" ere he had made it possible for her not to "sin." *She* admired it in her Max, that he had the piano returned to the drawing-room of the father whom he had heard say how it had hurt him that his girls

were deprived of music "since that bankruptcy." *She* understood perfectly that her Max bought the liberty of a slave family at Menado, when they seemed bitterly wretched at having to mount the table of the auctioneer. *She* thought it natural that Max gave other horses to the Alfoors in the *Minahassa*, when theirs had been ridden to death by the officers of the *Bayonnaise*. *She* did not object at Menado and Amboina when he called before him and looked after the castaways of the American whalers, and felt himself too much *grand seigneur* to present an hotel bill to the American Government. *She* thought it quite right that the officers of every man-of-war that arrived mostly stayed with Max, and that his house was their favourite *pied-à-terre*.

Was he not *her* Max? Would it not have been too petty, too childish, too absurd to bind him, who thought on so princely a scale, to the rules of economy and carefulness which are valid for others? And besides, even though for the moment there might seem to be a disproportion between their income and their expenditure, was not Max, *her* Max, destined for a brilliant career? Would he not soon be in circumstances which would enable him, without exceeding his income, to give a free rein to his magnanimous inclinations? Would not *her* Max be some day Governor-General of her beloved India, or even . . . a King? Was it not, indeed, strange that he had not yet been made a King?

If in these things there was in her a kind of *naïveté*, the cause of it was her infatuation for Havelaar; and, if ever, the saying that much must be forgiven to those who have loved much was applicable in her case!

But she had nothing to be forgiven. Without quite sharing the exaggerated notions she fostered with regard to her Max, one may still assume that he had before him a promising future; and if this well-founded prospect had been realized, the unpleasant consequences of his liberality might indeed soon have been removed. But also another reason, of an entirely different nature, excused her and his seeming carelessness.

She had lost her parents when very young, and been brought up with relations. When she was married they told her that she possessed a little money, which they paid her. But Havelaar discovered, from some letters of an earlier date, and from stray notes which she kept in a small case that had belonged to her mother, that her people, both on the side of her father and her mother, had been very rich; yet he could find nothing to explain where, when, or through what cause that wealth had been lost. She herself, who had never taken an interest in money matters, could answer him little or nothing when he pressed for particulars with regard to the former possessions of her relatives. Her grandfather, the Baron Van Wynbergen, had followed Prince William V in exile to England, and had been a cavalry captain in the army of the Duke of York. He appeared to have led a gay life with the exiled members of the *stadhouder's* family, and this had been assigned in many quarters as the cause of losing his fortune. Afterwards, at Waterloo, he fell in a charge with the hussars of Boreel. It was touching to read the letters of her father — who was then a youth of eighteen, and who, as a lieutenant in the same corps, received in the same charge a sabre cut on the head, from the consequence of which he was to die demented eight years later — letters to his mother, in which he complained that he had vainly searched the battlefield for the body of his father.

As regards her descent on her mother's side, she remembered that her grandfather had lived in great affluence, and it was evident from some of the papers that he had owned the postal service in Switzerland, in the same manner as, even now, in large portions of Germany and Italy, this branch of revenue is the appanage of the princes of *Turn and Taxis*. This suggested a large fortune, but again, without any known cause, nothing or only very little appeared to have come down to the second generation.

Havelaar did not learn the little that was still to be learnt about the matter until after his marriage, and in his researches it aroused his astonishment that the small case which I just referred to — and

which, with its contents, she kept from a sense of piety, without suspecting that perhaps there were documents in it of importance from a financial point of view — was suddenly lost in the most unaccountable manner. Though in no way mercenary, he could not help forming, from this and many other circumstances, the opinion that behind it was concealed a *roman intime*, and one can scarcely blame him, with his expensive inclinations, for the fact that it would have given him great pleasure if that novel had ended happily. Now whatever may have been the truth about this novel, and whether or no there had been spoliation, there is no doubt that in Havelaar's mind something had arisen that one might call a *rêve aux millions*.

But again it was characteristic that he, who would most accurately and keenly have traced and defended the rights of others, however deeply buried under dusty documents and cobwebs of intrigue, now, when his own interests were concerned, neglected in the most slovenly manner the moment when probably the matter might have been tackled with the best chance of success. He seemed to feel something like shame in a case where his own advantage was at stake, and I firmly believe that if "his Tine" had been married to someone else, someone who had appealed to him to lend a hand in breaking the thick cobwebs in which her ancestral fortune had remained stuck, he would have succeeded in restoring to "the interesting orphan" the fortune that belonged to her. But now this interesting orphan was *his* wife, *her* fortune was *his*, and he felt something commercial, something derogatory in asking in her name: "Do you not still owe me something?"

And yet he could not shake off this dream of millions, even though it were only as a handy excuse in answer to the oft-recurring self-reproach that he spent too much money.

Not until shortly before starting on the return journey to Java, when he had already suffered considerably from the pressure of money shortage, when he had had to bow his proud head under the *furca caudina* of many a creditor, had he succeeded in con-

quering his sluggishness or his reluctance to take up the matter of the millions he fancied he might still expect. And he was answered with an old current account . . . an argument, as is well known, which is unanswerable.

But oh, they were to be so careful at *Lebak*! And why not? In such an uncivilized country no girls wander about the streets late at night, who have a little "honour" to sell for a little food. One meets no stray people there who live by problematic professions. It does not happen there that a family is suddenly ruined by a change of fortune . . . and such, after all, were usually the rocks whereon Havelaar's good intentions foundered. The number of Europeans in that division was so insignificant that it might be called negligible, and at *Lebak* the Javanese were too poor to become — by whatever vicissitude — interesting by still greater poverty. All this was not exactly considered by Tine — if so, it would have been necessary for her to go into the causes of their reduced circumstances more precisely than her love of Max made desirable — but there was in their new surroundings something like the calm after a storm, a kind of absence of every inducement which — of course with a more or less falsely romantic appearance — had ere this so often made Havelaar say:

"Well, Tine, this surely is a case I cannot very well pass by!"

To which words she had ever answered:

"No, certainly not, Max, you cannot pass this by!"

We shall see, however, how this simple, apparently unexciting place of *Lebak* cost Havelaar more than all former excesses of his heart taken together. But this they could not know! They looked to the future with confidence, and felt so happy in their love and the possession of their child. . . .

"What a lot of roses in the garden," exclaimed Tine, "and even *rampeh* and *tchempaka*, and so much *melatti*,¹ and look at those beautiful lilies . . ."

¹ Javanese plants.

And being the children they were, they were delighted with their new house. And when in the evening Duclari and Verbrugge, after a visit to Havelaar, returned to their joint home, they talked a lot about the childlike cheerfulness of the newly arrived family.

Havelaar went to his office, and remained there the whole night, until the next morning.



CHAPTER VIII

HAVELAAR had asked the Controller to invite the chiefs who were present at *Rangkas-Betoong* to remain there until the next day, in order to take part in the *Sebah*¹ which he intended to hold. These meetings were usually held once a month; but either because he wished to save unnecessary journeys to and fro to some of the Chiefs who lived rather far from the head-centre — for the division of *Lebak* is very extensive — or because he wanted to address them solemnly at once, without waiting for the appointed day, certain it is that he had fixed the first *Sebah*-day for the next morning.

In front of his residence, on the left-hand side, but in the same grounds, and opposite the house where Mrs. Slotering lived, stood a building which partly contained the offices of the Assistant-Residency, including the local Treasury, and partly consisted of a wide open colonnade, offering a specially suitable place for such a meeting. And there it was that early the following morning the Chiefs were assembled. Havelaar appeared, bowed, and sat down. He received the written monthly reports on agriculture, stock, police, and justice, and laid them by for later examination.

After this everyone expected an address like that which the Resident had delivered the day before, and it is uncertain whether Havelaar himself had the intention of saying anything else; but one must have heard and seen him on such occasions to realize how, during an address of this kind, he was carried away by his subject, and, by his characteristic manner of speaking, gave a new colouring to the most familiar things; how then his figure would rise erect, his glance would shoot fire, his voice would change from soft caress to bladelike sharpness, from his lips would flow metaphors as though

¹ Council Meeting.

he scattered around him precious jewels which to him had cost nothing, and, when he ceased, how everyone would gaze at him open-mouthed, as though asking: "Great God, who is this speaking?"

It is true that he, who on such occasions spoke as an apostle, a seer, could not say afterwards how exactly he had spoken, and in reality his eloquence was more apt to astonish and move than to convince by terseness of reasoning. He might, as soon as Athens had resolved upon war against Philip, have fired the war-spirit of his compatriots to madness; but probably he would have been less successful in the task of moving them to such war by logical persuasion. His address to the chiefs of *Lebak* was of course in Malay, and this lent it an additional quality, as the simplicity of the Oriental languages gives to many expressions a force which in our idioms has been lost through literary artificiality, whilst on the other hand the melodious sweetness of the Malay language is difficult to reproduce in any other tongue. It must also be remembered that the greater number of his hearers consisted of simple but by no means ignorant people, and that besides they were Orientals, whose impressions differ greatly from ours.

Havelaar must have spoken somewhat like this: —

"*Radhen Adhipatti*, Regent of *Bantan Kedool*, and you, *Radhens Dhemang*, who are chiefs of the districts in this division, and you, *Radhen Djaksa*, whose office is that of justice, and you also, *Radhen Klewon*, who exercise authority at the head-centre, and you, *Radhens Mantrees* and all who are chiefs in the division of *Bantan Kedool*, I greet you!

"And I say to you that I feel joy in my heart at seeing you all here assembled, listening to the words of my mouth.

"I know that there are among you who excel in knowledge and in goodness of heart; I hope to augment my knowledge from yours, for my store thereof is not as large as I would wish it. And though I love goodness, yet often I become aware that in me there are faults that cast a shadow on my heart's goodness, and hinder its

growth . . . you all know how the large tree supplants the small one and kills it. Therefore I shall watch those among you who excel in virtue so that I may seek to become better than I am.

"I greet you all sincerely."

"When the Governor-General instructed me to go to you as the Assistant-Resident of this division, my heart was rejoiced. It may be known to you that I had never set foot in *Bantan Kedool*. I therefore asked to be given reports dealing with your division, and I have seen that there is much in *Bantan Kedool* that is good. Your people have rice-fields in the valleys, and there are also rice-fields on the mountains. And you wish to live in peace, and you do not desire to dwell in the lands that are inhabited by others. Yes, I know that there is much that is good in *Bantan Kedool*.

"But not only for this reason was my heart rejoiced. For in other districts also I should doubtless have found much that was good.

"But I discovered that your people are poor, and about this I was glad in my inmost soul.

"For I know that Allah loves the poor, and that He gives riches to those whom He wishes to test. But to the poor He sends the one who speaks His word, that they may arise from their misery.

"Does He not give rain where the ears are wilting, and a dew-drop in the cup of the thirsty flower?

"And is it not glorious to be sent in search of the weary, who fell behind after the day's labour, and sank down by the wayside, as their knees were no longer strong enough to bear them in going up to the place where the wages are paid? Should I not rejoice in being able to hold out a helping hand to him who fell into the furrow, and to give a staff to him who has to climb the mountains? Should not my heart leap up within me to see itself chosen among many, that it may turn lamentations into prayer and weeping into thanksgiving?

"Yes, I am greatly rejoiced at being called to *Bantan Kedool*!

"I have said to the woman who shares my troubles and makes my happiness greater: 'Rejoice, for I see that Allah gives blessing

on the head of our child! He has sent me to a place where not all the labour has been accomplished, and He has judged me worthy of being there before the harvest time. For the joy is not in cutting the *paddy*: the joy is in cutting the *paddy* one has planted. And the soul of man does not grow through the wages, but through the labour that earns the wages.' And I said to her: 'Allah has given us a child that will say some day: "Do you know that I am *His* son?" And then there will be those in the land who will greet him with love, and who will lay their hands on his head, and will say: "Sit down to our meal, and stay in our house, and partake of all we have, for I knew your father."'

"Chiefs of *Lebak*, there is much good labour to be accomplished in your district!

"Tell me, is not the husbandman poor? Does not often your *paddy* ripen to feed those who have not planted? Are there not many wrongs in your land? Is not the number of your children small?

"Is there not shame in your souls when the dweller in *Bandoong*, that lies yonder to the Eastward, visits your district and asks: 'Where are all the villages, and where the husbandmen? And why do I not hear the *gamlang*, that speaks gladness with its mouth of brass, nor the pounding of the *paddy* by your daughters?'

"Does it not fill you with bitterness, when you travel hence unto the south coast and see the mountains that bear no water on their sides, or the plains where never a buffalo drew the plough?

"Yes, yes, I tell you that your soul and mine are sad thereat; and for that very reason we are grateful to Allah that He has given us the power to labour here.

"For in this land we have acres for many, though the dwellers here are few. And it is not the rain that is lacking, for the tops of the mountains suck the clouds from heaven to earth. And it is not everywhere that rocks refuse room to the root, for in many places the soil is soft and fertile, and cries out for the grain that she will return to us as an ear bent with fruitful weight. And there is no

war in the land to trample down the *paddy* even while it is green, nor sickness that renders the *patjol*¹ useless. Nor are there sunbeams hotter than is necessary to ripen the grain that shall feed you and your children, nor *banjirs*² to make your lament: 'Show me the place where I have sown!'

"Where Allah sends water-torrents that tear away the paddocks . . . where He makes the soil hard as the barren stones . . . where He makes His sun burn to scorch all growth . . . where He sends war to turn up the fields . . . where He smites with sickness that makes the hands limp, or with drought that kills the ears . . . there, Chiefs of *Lebak*, we bow the head in meekness, and say: 'He wills it thus!'

"But not so in *Bantan Kedool*!

"I have been sent here to be your friend, your elder brother. Would you not warn your younger brother if you saw a tiger on his path?

"Chiefs of *Lebak*, we have oft made mistakes, and our country is poor because we made so many mistakes.

"For in *Tjikandi*, and *Bolang*, and in *Krawang*, and in the outlying districts of *Batavia*, there are many who were born in our district, and who have left it.

"Why are they seeking work far from the place where they have buried their parents? Why do they flee from the *dessah*³ where they were circumcised? Why do they select the coolness under the tree that grows there, rather than the shade of your forests?

"And yonder in the north-west across the sea, there are many who should be our children, but who have left *Lebak* to wander about in remote regions with *kris* and *klewang*⁴ and rifle. And they die miserably, for the power of the Government is there to defeat the rebels.

¹ Spade.

² Floods.

³ Village.

⁴ Sword.

"I ask you, Chiefs of *Bantan Kedool*, why are there so many that went away to be buried where they were not born? Why does the tree ask what has become of the man whom he saw as a child playing at its foot?"

Havelaar ceased for a moment. One had to hear and see in order to realize the impression his language made. When he spoke of his child, his voice had a softness, an indescribable emotion, which invited the question: "Where is the little one? Already now let me kiss the child that makes his father speak like this!" But when shortly afterwards, with little apparent transition, he passed on to the questions as to why *Lebak* was poor, and why so many inhabitants of the district left for elsewhere, there was a quality in the tone of his voice which reminded one of that made by a gimlet when it is forcibly screwed into hard wood. Yet he did not speak loudly, nor lay any special stress on isolated words, and there was even a certain monotony in his voice; but, be it study or nature, this very monotony made the impression of his words more intense on the hearts that were so particularly receptive to such language.

His metaphors, always taken from the life about him, were to him truly the auxiliary means to make clear what he wished to express, and not, as is so often the case, irksome appendages that overload the periods of orators, without adding any clearness to the sense of the matter they pretend to elucidate. We are long accustomed to the absurdity of the expression: "strong as a lion," but he that first in Europe used this metaphor showed that he had not drawn his simile from the poesy of the soul, which gives images by way of reasoning, and which *cannot* speak otherwise, but that he had merely copied his trite commonplace from some book or other — perhaps the Bible — in which a *lion* was mentioned. For none of his hearers had ever experienced the strength of the lion, and consequently it would have been far more requisite to make them realize that strength by comparison of the lion with something the power of which was known to them by experience, than *vice versa*.

Be it acknowledged that Havelaar was in truth a poet. Anyone

must feel that, as he spoke of the rice-fields on the mountains, his glances wandered up to them through the open end of the hall, and that he really saw those fields. One realizes that, when he made the tree ask where the man was who as a child had played at its foot, that tree was actually there and, to the imagination of Havelaar's audience, gazed around in truth inquiring about the departed dwellers of *Lebak*. Also, he invented nothing: he *heard* the tree speaking, and imagined he was only repeating what in his poetic conception he had so clearly understood.

If anyone should make the remark that the originality in Havelaar's manner of speaking was not altogether indisputable, as his language was reminiscent of the style of the prophets in the Old Testament, I must remind him that I have already described how in moments of exaltation he really became more or less a seer. Fed on the impressions communicated to him by a life in forests and on mountains, surrounded by the poetry-breathing atmosphere of the East, and therefore drawing from sources similar to those of the Monitors of old with whom one felt at times compelled to compare him, we may guess that he would not have spoken otherwise even if he had never read the glorious poems of the Old Testament. Do we not find, already in the verses that date back to his youth, lines like the following, written on the *Salak* — one of the giants, though not the biggest, among the mountains of the *Preanger Regencies* — where again the start suggests the sweetness of his emotions, but suddenly passes into an echo of the thunder which he hears from below? —

“ Here, to his Maker, man's loud praise is sweeter . . .
 By hill and mountain-range his prayer sounds true . . .
 Here more than yonder are my soul-wings fleeter:
 On mountain-heights I soar my God unto!
 Here He created temple-choirs and altars,
 Where human footsteps would seem blasphemy;
 Here, in His tempest, He inspired our psalters . . .
 Here rolls His thunder, voicing: ‘ Majesty! ’ ”

. . . and do we not feel that he could not have written the last lines as they are, if he had not actually seemed to hear and understand how God's thunder called out those lines to him in roaring quavers reverberating from the mountain walls?

But in reality he did not care for verse. "It was an ugly corset," he said, and if he were induced to read anything he had "committed," as he put it, he delighted in spoiling his own work, either by reciting it in a tone calculated to make it ridiculous, or by suddenly stopping, especially in a most solemn passage, and throwing in a jest which was painful to his audience, but which, as coming from himself, was nothing else than a heart-wrung satire on the disproportion between that strait-jacket and his soul, which in it felt so miserably oppressed.

There were but few of the Chiefs who took any of the refreshments that were served, when Havelaar with a sign ordered that tea and *maneesan*,¹ the inevitable fare for such an occasion, be brought in. It seemed as if he intentionally wished to provide a pause after the last sentence of his address. And there was good reason for it. "Why," the Chiefs were meant to think, "he already knows that so many have left our division, with bitterness at heart? Already he knows how many families have emigrated to neighbouring districts, to avoid the poverty that prevails here? And he knows even that there are so many *Bantammers* among the bands that in the *Lampongs* have unfurled the banner of rebellion against Dutch authority? What is his purpose? What does he mean? Whom do his questions refer to?"

And there were those who looked at *Radhen Weera Koosooma*, the District Chief of *Parang Koodyang*. But the majority had their eyes fixed on the ground.

"Just come here, Max!" called Havelaar, noticing his child playing outside, and the Regent took the little one on his knees. But the boy was too wild to stay there long. He bounded away, and ran round the wide circle and amused the Chiefs with his prattle, and

¹ Confectionery.

played with the hilts of their *krisses*. When he came near the *Djaksa*, who caught the child's attention because he was more handsomely dressed than the others, that Chief seemed to point out something with regard to little Max's head to the *Klewoon*, who sat next to him, and who appeared to agree with a whispered remark on the subject.

"Go away now, Max," said Havelaar, "papa wants to say something to these gentlemen."

The boy ran away, after having thrown kisses with his hand by way of leave-taking.

After this Havelaar continued thus:

"Chiefs of *Lebak*! We are all in the service of the King of the Netherlands. But he, who is just, and desires us to do our duty, is far from here. Thirty times a thousand times a thousand souls, nay, more, are bound to obey his orders, but he cannot be near all those who depend on his will.

"The great Lord in *Buitenzorg* is just, and wishes everyone to do his duty. But he also, mighty though he is, and having authority over all who have power in the towns and all who are the elders in the villages, and disposing of the forces of the army and of the ships that speed across the seas, he also cannot see where injustice has been done, for it remains far from him.

"And the Resident at *Serang*, who is lord of the region of *Bantam*, where five times a hundred thousand people dwell, wishes that justice be done in his territory, and that righteousness shall rule in the lands that obey him. But when there is injustice, it is far from his dwelling. And whoever does evil hides from his face for fear of punishment.

"And the lord *Adhipatti*, who is the Regent of *South-Bantam*, desires that all shall live who practise goodness, and that there shall be no shame in the district which is his regency.

"And I, who yesterday called upon the Almighty God as my witness that I should be just and merciful, that I should do justice

without fear and without hate, that I should be 'a good Assistant-Resident' . . . I also wish to do what is my duty.

"Chiefs of *Lebak*! Who then shall do justice in *Bantan Kedool*?

"But should there happen to be among us those who neglect their duty for gain, who sell justice for money, or take the buffalo from the poor man, and the fruit that belongs to those who are hungry . . . who shall punish them?

"If one of you knew it, he would prevent it. And the Regent would not suffer such things to happen in his Regency. And I also shall prevent it wherever I can. But if neither you, nor the *Adhi-patti*, nor I knew it . . .

"Chiefs of *Lebak*! Who then shall do justice in *Bantan-Kedool*?

"Listen to me, and I will tell you how then justice shall be done.

"There comes a time when our women and children will weep while they are preparing our pall, and the passer-by will say: 'There is a death in this house!' Then whoever arrives in the villages will bring tidings of the death of the one that is no more, and whoso harbours him will ask: 'Who *was* the man that died?' and it will be said:

"'He was good and just. He spoke justice and drove not the complainer from his door. He listened patiently to those that came to him and returned what had been taken from them. And if a man could not drive the plough through the earth because the buffalo had been stolen from the stable, he helped him to find the buffalo. And where the daughter had been taken from the house of the mother, he found the thief and brought back the daughter. And where the labourer had laboured, he withheld not his wage from him, and he took not the fruit from him who had planted the tree. He clothed not himself with the garment that should have covered another, nor fed himself with the food that belonged to the poor.'

"Then they will say in the villages: 'Allah is great, Allah has taken him unto Himself. His will be done . . . a good man has died.'

"And again the passer-by will stop before a house and ask:

‘Why is this, that the *gamlang* is silent, and the song of the maidens?’ And again they will say to him: ‘A man has died.’

“And he that travels through the villages will sit with his host at eve, and round about him the sons and daughters of the house, and the children of those that live in the villages, and he will say:

“‘A man has died who promised to be just, and he sold justice to those who gave him money. He made his land fertile with the sweat of the labourer whom he had called away from his own field of labour. He withheld the wage from the worker, and fed himself with the food of the poor. He grew rich by the poverty of others. He had much gold and silver and precious stones in abundance, but the husbandman who dwells in the neighbourhood knew not how to still the hunger of his child. He smiled like a happy man, but one heard gnashing between the teeth of the complainer who sought justice. There was contentment on his face, but no milk in the breasts of the mothers who suckled.’

“Then the dwellers in the villages will say: ‘Allah is great . . . we curse no one!’

“Chiefs of *Lebak*, one day we shall all die!

“What will be said in the villages where we held authority? And what by the passers-by who look on at the burial?

“And what shall we answer, when after our death a voice shall speak to our soul, and ask: ‘Why is there weeping in the fields, and why are the young men hiding? Who took from the barns the harvest, and from the stalls the buffalo that was to plough the field? What have you done to the brother whom I gave unto you that you should be to him as a guardian? Why is the poor man sad and why does he curse the fruitfulness of his wife?’”

Again Havelaar ceased, and after a moment’s silence he resumed in the simplest possible manner, and as though nothing whatever had occurred that was intended to make an impression:

“I should like to live with you in the best understanding, and I therefore ask you to look upon me as a friend. If anyone should have erred, he may depend on a lenient judgment from me, for as I

am but too often in error myself, I shall not be severe . . . that is to say not in ordinary service offences of commission or omission. Only when neglect of duty becomes a habit I shall seek to arrest it. I will not speak of misdemeanours of a grosser nature . . . of extortion and oppression. Nothing of that kind will happen, will it, *Adhipatti?* ”

“ Oh, no, Sir, such things will not happen in *Lebak*. ”

“ Well then, gentlemen, Chiefs of *Bantan Kedool*, let us be rejoiced that our division is so backward and poor. We have a beautiful duty to fulfil. If Allah will spare our lives, we shall see to it that well-being is created. The soil is fertile enough, and the people are willing. If everyone is left in the enjoyment of the fruit of his exertion, there is no doubt that in a short space of time the population will increase, both in numbers and in possessions and culture, for these things most frequently go hand in hand. I again ask you to look upon me as a friend who will help you where he can, especially where injustice has to be prevented. And with this I recommend myself to your co-operation.

“ I shall in due course return to you the Reports on Crop, Stock, Police, and Justice.

“ *Chiefs of Bantan Kedool!* I have spoken. You may return, everyone to his home. I greet you all cordially! ”

He bowed, offered his arm to the Regent, and conducted him through the grounds to the residence, where Tine stood waiting for him in the front veranda.

“ Come on, Verbrugge, don't go home yet! Come along . . . a glass of Madeira? And . . . oh yes, this I must know, *Radhen Djaksa*. Tell me! ”

This Havelaar called out when all the Chiefs, after many curtsies, prepared to return to their homes. Verbrugge also was on the point of leaving the grounds, but now came back with the *Djaksa*.

“ Tine, I'll have some Madeira, and so will Verbrugge. *Djaksa*, tell me, what was it you told the *Klewoon* about my little boy? ”

"*Mintah ampong*,¹ Sir, I looked at his head because you had spoken."

"Well, what the deuce had his head got to do with that? I have already forgotten what I said."

"Sir, I said to the *Klewoon* . . ."

Tine moved nearer: they were talking about little Max.

"Sir, I said to the *Klewoon* that the *Seenyo*² was a king's child."

This pleased Tine: she thought so too!

The *Adhipatti* examined the head of the boy, and, to be sure, he also saw on its crown the double hair-twist which, according to Javanese superstition, is intended to wear a crown.

As etiquette did not permit of offering the *Djaksa* a seat in the presence of the Regent, the former took leave, and for a little while everyone conversed without touching upon anything that referred to the "service." But all at once — and therefore contrary to the national customs, which are so excessively courteous — the Regent asked whether certain moneys which were owing to the Tax Collector could not be paid.

"Certainly not," exclaimed Verbrugge, "the *Adhipatti* knows that this may not be done before his accounts are approved."

Havelaar was playing with Max. But it became apparent that this did not prevent him reading on the face of the Regent that Verbrugge's answer did not please him.

"Come on, Verbrugge, we won't be disagreeable," he said. And he sent for a clerk from the office. "We may as well pay this . . . the accounts will no doubt be approved."

When the *Adhipatti* was gone, Verbrugge, who was greatly interested in the *Gazettes*, said:

"Surely, Mr. Havelaar, this is not permitted! The accounts of the collector are still at *Serang* for examination . . . suppose there is something wrong with them?"

"Then I shall make it good," said Havelaar.

Verbrugge could not for the life of him understand the reason for

¹ "I beg your pardon."

² Young gentleman.

this great indulgence towards the Tax Collector. The clerk soon returned with some papers. Havelaar signed and gave orders that the payment should be expedited.

"Verbrugge, I'll tell you why I do this! The Regent hasn't a penny in his house, his clerk told me so, and besides . . . his brusque request! The thing is obvious. It is he *himself* who wants that money, and the collector will lend it to him. I'd sooner on my own responsibility set aside a formality than leave a man of his rank and years in embarrassment. Moreover, Verbrugge, in *Lebak* there is a scandalous abuse of authority. You must know this. Do you know it?"

Verbrugge was silent. He knew it.

"I know it," continued Havelaar, "*I know it!* Didn't Mr. Slotering die in November? Well, *the day after his death* the Regent summoned people to work *his Sawahs* . . . without payment! You should have known this, Verbrugge. *Did you know it?*"

This Verbrugge did *not* know.

"As Controller you *ought* to have known it! *I know it,*" Havelaar continued. "Over there are the monthly reports of the districts" — and he showed the parcel of papers which he had received at the meeting — "you see, I have opened nothing. But in that parcel are, among other things, the statements of labourers furnished at the head-centre for statute service. Well, are these statements correct?"

"I have not yet seen them . . ."

"Neither have I! And yet I ask you whether they are correct. Were the statements for the previous month correct?"

Verbrugge was silent.

"I'll tell you: they were *false!* For three times more people had been summoned to work for the Regent than the Regulations on statute service permit, and of course one does not put this into the statements. Is it true what I say?"

Verbrugge was silent.

"Again the statements I have received to-day are false," con-

tinued Havelaar. "The Regent is poor. The Regents of *Bandoong* and *Tjandjoor* are members of the family of which he is the head. The latter has only the rank of *Tommongong*; our Regent is *Adhipatti*, and yet his income, because *Lebak* is not suitable for coffee, and therefore pays him no emoluments, does not permit him to compete in pomp and splendour with a humble *Dhemang* in the *Preanger*, who would hold the stirrup when his cousins mounted their horses. Is this true?"

"Yes, this is true."

"He has nothing but his salary, and this is subject to a deduction in payment of an advance which the Government made him when he . . . do you *know* it?"

"Yes, I know it."

"When he wished to have a new *medsjid* built, for which money was wanted. Besides, many members of his family . . . do you *know* it?"

"Yes, I know that."

"Many members of his family, which in reality does not belong to *Lebak*, and therefore is not in favour with the population, hang round him like a gang of pirates, and extort money from him. Is this true?"

"It is the truth," said Verbrugge.

"And when his coffers are empty, which is often the case, they despoil the people *in his name* of all that pleases them. Is this as I say?"

"It is."

"Then I am correctly informed; but about this later. The Regent, who, with advancing years, is afraid of death, is possessed with the wish to win merit by gifts to the priests. He spends much money on outlay for pilgrims to Mecca, who bring thence to him all sorts of rubbish by way of relics, charms and *djimits*.¹ Isn't that so?"

"Yes, that is so."

¹ Letters fallen from Heaven.

"Well, then, through all this he is so poor. The *Dhemang* of *Parang Koodyang* is his son-in-law. Where the Regent himself, afraid of bringing shame on his rank, dare not take, it is this *Dhemang* — but not he alone — who courts favour with the *Adhi-patti* by extorting money and kind from the poor population, and by fetching the people away from their own rice-fields and driving them to the *sawahs* of the Regent. And the latter . . . look, I am willing to believe that he would like it to be otherwise, but necessity forces him to resort to such means. Is not all this true, Verbrugge?"

"Yes, it is true," said Verbrugge, who began to realize more and more that Havelaar's eyes were keen.

"I knew," continued the Assistant-Resident, "that he had no money in his house, when just now he began to speak about the settlement with the sub-collector. You heard this morning that it is my intention to do my duty. I will brook no injustice, by God, I will not brook it!"

And he jumped up, and in his tone there was something very different from that of the previous day on the occasion of his *official* oath.

"But," he resumed, "I wish to do my duty with forbearance. I do not wish to know too precisely what *has* happened. But whatever happens *from to-day* is on *my* responsibility, of it *I* shall take charge. I hope to be here long. Do you know, Verbrugge, that our calling is gloriously beautiful? But do you know also that everything I said to you just now should really have come from *you* to me? I know you as well as I know who are making *garenglap*¹ on the south coast. You are an honest man . . . this also I know. But why did you not tell me that there was so much wrong here? For two months you were Acting Assistant-Resident, and moreover you have been here a long time as Controller . . . you ought therefore to know it, don't you think?"

"Mr. Havelaar, I have never served under anyone like you. There is something unusual about you, pardon me."

¹ Illicit making of salt.

"Certainly! I know quite well that I am not like all people, but what difference does this make?"

"It makes this difference, that you give one conceptions and ideas that did not exist before."

"No, they had been lulled asleep by the cursed lax custom which finds its style in '*I have the honour*,' and its peace of conscience in '*The high satisfaction of the Government*.' No, Verbrugge! do not libel yourself! You need learn nothing from me. For instance, did I tell you anything new this morning in the *Sebah*?"

"No, not exactly new, but you spoke differently from others. . . ."

"Yes, that is . . . because my education has been somewhat neglected: I speak only occasionally. But you were to tell me why hitherto you have acquiesced in all that was wrong in *Lebak*."

"I never before had such an impression of *initiative*. Besides, all this has never been otherwise in these parts."

"Yes, yes, I know that! Everyone cannot be a prophet or an apostle . . . hm! so many crucifixions would otherwise make timber dear! But surely you will help me to set the whole thing right? You will do your *duty*, won't you?"

"Certainly! Especially under you. But not everyone would demand that so rigorously, or would even take it in good part, and then one easily gets into the position of a man who fights wind-mills."

"No! Then those who love injustice, because they live by it, say that there *was* no injustice, in order that they may have the amusement of calling you and me Don Quixotes, and that they may at the same time keep *their* windmills grinding. But, Verbrugge, you needn't have waited for *me* to do your duty! Mr. Slotering was an able and honest man: he knew what was happening; he disapproved it and set himself against it . . . look at this!"

And Havelaar took from a portfolio two sheets of paper, which he showed Verbrugge, asking:

"Whose writing is this?"

"That is Mr. Slotering's handwriting."

"Exactly! Well, these are rough notes, apparently containing subjects he wished to discuss with the Resident. I read here . . . look: '1°, *On rice culture*; 2°, *On the houses of the District-Chiefs*; 3°, *On the collection of land-rents! ! etc.*' Behind that there are two exclamation marks. What did Mr. Slotering mean by those?"

"How can I know that?" exclaimed Verbrugge.

"I do! It means that far more is paid in land-rent than flows into the State coffers. But I will now show you something we both know, as it is written in letters, and not in signs. Look here: —

"'12°, *On the abuse made of the population by Regents and lesser Chiefs. (On the practice of keeping up several residences at the expense of the population, etc.)*'

"Is this clear? You see that Mr. Slotering unquestionably was a man who knew how to take an *initiative*. You might therefore have joined up with him. Listen again: —

"'15°, *That many persons of the families and servants of the native chiefs appear on the pay-sheets who in reality take no part in the cropping, so that the profits of this fall to them, to the disadvantage of the real participants. Also they are illegally put in possession of sawah-fields, which rightly only belong to those who take part in the cropping.*'"

"Here I find another memo: and that in pencil. Look: on that also there is a very clear statement: —

"'The falling off in the population of Parang Koodyang is *entirely due to the scandalous way the people are abused.*'

"What do you say to that? Do you see, now, that I am not so eccentric as it appears, when I pay attention to justice? You see now that others did so! — And what followed then?"

"Then the Regent would be called: there would be an *oral* interview . . ."

"Exactly! And then?"

"The Regent usually denied everything. Then witnesses would

be called . . . no one dared give witness against the Regent . . . ah, Mr. Havelaar, these things are so difficult!"

The reader will, before he has finished reading my book, know just as well as Verbrugge why these things were so particularly difficult.

"Mr. Slotering," continued the Controller, "had a great deal of annoyance through it all; he wrote sharp letters to the Chiefs . . ."

"I read them . . . last night," said Havelaar.

"And I often heard him say that, if there were no change, and if the Resident did not take *proper action*, he would write direct to the Governor-General. This he also said to the Chiefs at the last *Sebah* over which he presided."

"That would have been a great mistake on his part. The Resident was his Chief, whom he should under no consideration have passed by. And why, indeed, should he? It surely may not be supposed that the Resident of *Bantam* would approve injustice and arbitrariness?"

"Approve . . . no! But one would rather not charge a Chief before the Government."

"I am not fond of accusing anyone, whoever he may be, but if it *must* be done, then a Chief as soon as anyone else. But here, thank God, there is not yet any question of laying a charge! To-morrow I am going to see the Regent. I shall represent to him the wrongfulness of illegal exercise of authority, especially where the property of poor people is concerned. But in anticipation that everything will right itself, I shall assist him as much as I can in his ticklish circumstances. You now understand why I had that money paid to the collector, don't you? I also intend asking the Government to remit the advance owed by the Regent. And to you, Verbrugge, I propose that we together do our duty punctiliously. As long as it is possible, gently, but if *necessary*, without fear! You are an honest man, I know, but you are timid. In future say frankly how matters stand, come of it what may! Throw off half-heartedness, my dear fellow . . . and now, stay to dinner: we have Dutch cauliflower tinned

. . . but everything is quite simple, for I have to be very economical . . . I am much behind in my finances: the voyage to Europe, you know! Come, Max . . . good gracious, lad, how heavy you are getting!"

And, having taken Max astride on his shoulder, he entered the front veranda, followed by Verbrugge. Tine was waiting for them with the table laid, which, as Havelaar had said, was truly *very* simple! Duclari, who came to ask Verbrugge whether he expected to be home for dinner, was also invited to stay, and if the reader is keen on a little variety in my story, I refer him to the next chapter, in which I shall relate all the things that were said during the meal.



CHAPTER IX

I WOULD give a good deal now, reader, to know exactly how long I could keep a heroine floating in the air, before you would, during my description of a castle, throw my book down in disgust without waiting till the poor creature came down to the ground. If in my story I required such a leap from the blue, I should certainly, by way of precaution, choose a first floor as starting-point for her jump, and a castle about which there was not much to say. However, make yourself easy: Havelaar's house had no storeys, and the heroes of my book — good heavens! dear, trusty, irreproachable Tine, a heroine! she never vaulted out of a window.

When I closed the last chapter with a hint of some variety in the next one, it really was more an oratorical trick, with the object of making an ending that caught on, than that I actually intended you to believe that the next chapter would have no other value than "variety." A writer is vain, just like a . . . man. Speak ill of his mother or of the colour of his hair, say that he speaks with an Amsterdam accent — which fault no Amsterdammer ever admits — perhaps he will pardon you. But . . . never touch the outside of the smallest subdivision of a subordinate particle of something that has lain by the side of his writing . . . for then he will not forgive you! If, therefore, you don't think my book beautiful, and you should meet me, pretend that we don't know each other.

No, even a chapter "for variety" appears to me, through the magnifying-glass of my writer's vanity, highly important and even indispensable; and if you were to skip it, and after that showed no due appreciation of my book, I should not hesitate to reproach you with this skipping as the cause of your being unable to pronounce an opinion on my work, since it was exactly the *essential* portion

you had not read. In this way I should — for I am a man and a writer — consider as *essential* every chapter you had skipped with unpardonable reader-levity.

I picture to myself how your wife asks: "Is there anything in that book?" And you answer, for instance — *horribile auditu* for me — with the wealth of words characteristic of married men:

"Hm . . . well . . . I don't know yet."

Why, then, barbarian, read on. The all-important thing is just at your gate. And I gaze at you with trembling lips, and measure the thickness of leaves turned over, and on your face I search for the reflection of the chapter that is so beautiful . . .

"No," I say, "he has not got to it yet. Presently he will jump up, in ecstasy he will embrace something, perhaps his wife . . ."

But you read on. The "beautiful chapter" must be passed, I think. You have not jumped up at all, you have not embraced . . .

And ever thinner grows the volume of leaves under your right thumb, and ever more meagre grows my hope of that embrace . . . yes, faith! I had even made sure of a tear!

And you have read the novel through to "where they get each other," and you say yawning — again a form of eloquence in the state of wedlock:

"Why . . . well! It's a book that . . . hm! Well, they write such a lot nowadays!"

But know you not then, monster, tiger, *European*, reader, know you not then that you have just whiled away an hour chewing *my* spirit like a toothpick? Gnawing and biting flesh and bone of your own kindred? Cannibal, in it was my soul, my soul that you have chewed for the second time as a cow chews grass! It is *my* heart you have just swallowed as a delicacy! For in that book I had put both this heart and soul, and so many tears fell on the manuscript, and my blood oozed from my veins as I wrote on, and I gave you all this, and you bought it for a few pence . . . and you say: "hm!"

The reader will understand that I am not here speaking of *my* book.

So I just wish to say, in the words of Abraham Blankaart ¹ . . .

“Who’s Abraham Blankaart?” asked Louisa Rosemeyer, and Frits told her, to my great delight, for it gave me an opportunity of getting up and, at any rate for that night, making an end of the reading aloud. You know that I am a coffee-broker — *Laurier Canal, No. 37* — and that I sacrifice everything for my profession. Anyone will therefore realize how little satisfied I am with Stern’s work. I had hoped for coffee, and he gives us . . . ay! heaven knows what.

Already for three evenings of our “party” he had occupied us with his composition, and, worst of all, the Rosemeyers think it beautiful. At least so they say. Whenever I make any remark, he appeals to Louisa. Her approval, he says, weighs more with him than all the coffee in the world, and, moreover, “when my heart glows” . . . etc. — Look up this tirade on page so and so; or rather, don’t look it up. — So then, there I am, not knowing what to do next! That parcel of Shawlman’s is truly a Trojan horse. Frits also is being perverted by it. He has, I notice, helped Stern, for that fellow Abraham Blankaart is far too Dutch for a German. They are both such pedants that I am really getting perplexed about it. The worst thing is that I have made a contract with Ripesucker for the publication of a book that is to deal with the *coffee-sales* — all Holland is waiting for it — and just imagine how that Stern suddenly goes on a different tack altogether! yesterday he said: “Don’t worry, all roads lead to Rome. Just now wait for the end of the introduction” — is all this still only an *introduction*? — “I promise you” — he really said: “I *forspeak* ² you” — “that finally the thing will resolve itself into coffee, coffee! into

¹ Character in a Dutch novel of the 18th century.

² Anglicised German for *promise*.

nothing but coffee! Think of Horace," he continued, "has not he already said: '*omne tulit, punctum, qui miscuit*' . . . coffee with something else? Do not you act in the same way, when you put sugar and milk in your cup?"

And then I have to be silent. Not because he is right, but because I owe it as a duty to the firm *Last & Co.* to see that old Stern doesn't go over to Busselinck & Waterman, who would serve him badly because they are tricksters.

To you, reader, I pour out my heart, and in order that, reading Stern's scribbling — have you really read it? — you may not pour out your anger on an innocent head — for I ask you, who will engage a broker that calls him a cannibal? — I insist on convincing you of my innocence. For it is plain I cannot push Stern out of the firm of my book, now that things have gone so far that Louisa Rosemeyer, when she comes from Church — the boys seem to wait for her — asks whether he'll come early in the evening, so that he may read them a lot about Max and Tine.

But as you will have bought or hired the book relying on the respectable title, which promises something solid, I recognize your claim to a good thing for your money, and therefore am now again writing a couple of chapters myself. You don't belong to the club of the Rosemeyers, reader, and are therefore more fortunate than I, who have to listen to it all. You are at liberty to skip the chapters that smell of German excitability, and to take notice only of what is written by myself, who am a respectable man, and a coffee-broker.

I have been amazed to learn from Stern's scribblings — and he has shown me from Shawlman's parcel that it is true — that there are no coffee-plantations in that division of *Lebak*. This is very wrong, and I shall consider my trouble amply rewarded if my book succeeds in drawing the Government's attention to such an omission. It is supposed to be shown in those papers of Shawlman's that the soil in those parts is not suitable to coffee-growing. But this is in no way an excuse, and I maintain that they are guilty of

unpardonable neglect of duty towards Holland in general and the coffee-brokers in particular, ay, even towards the Javanese themselves, in not either changing that soil — after all, the Javanese have nothing else to do — or, if they think this cannot be done, sending the people that live there to other parts, where the soil is good for coffee.

I never say anything that I have not thoroughly considered, and I venture to say in this case I am speaking with intimate knowledge, as I have maturely reflected on the matter, especially since I heard the sermon of the Reverend Twaddler at the prayer-service for conversion of the heathen.

That was last Wednesday night. You must know, reader, that I scrupulously fulfil my duties as a father, and that the moral training of my children is a thing very near to my heart. Now as for some time Frits has shown something in his tone and manners that doesn't please me — it all comes out of that confounded parcel! — I gave him a sound lecture that day and said:

"Frits, I am not satisfied with you! I have always pointed out the right way to you, and yet you will take the crooked path. You are pedantic and troublesome, and you write verses, and you have given Betsy Rosemeyer a kiss. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom, so you must not kiss the Rosemeyers, and you must not be so pedantic. Immorality leads to perdition, my boy. Read the Scriptures, and just look at that Shawlman. He strayed from the ways of the Lord: now he is poor, and lives in a miserable little apartment . . . there you have the consequences of immorality and bad conduct! He wrote unbecoming articles in the *Indépendance*, and he dropped the *Aglaia*. That's what one comes to, when one is wise in his own eyes. Now he doesn't even know the time, and his little boy wears only half a pair of trousers. Remember that your body is a temple of God, and that your father has always had to work hard for a living — it's the truth! — therefore lift up your eyes to heaven, and see that you grow up to be a respectable broker by the time I retire to Driebergen. And do

watch all the people who refuse to listen to good advice, and who trample religion and morality under foot, and take warning from their example. And do not place yourself on an equality with Stern, whose father is rich, and who will have enough money in any case, even if he won't be a broker, and though he may now and then do something that's wrong. Do remember that all evil is punished: only look again at that Shawlman, who has no overcoat, and who looks just like a comedian. Do listen carefully at Church, and don't sit there wriggling in all directions on your seat, as if you were bored, my boy, for . . . what must God think of that? The Church is *His* sanctuary, you see! And don't wait for young girls when Church is over, for that takes away all your edification. And also don't make Mary giggle when I read the Scripture at breakfast-time. That is not becoming in a respectable household; and then you have drawn funny figures in Bastians' ledger, while the man has been away again — as he's always having lumbago — that keeps the men in the office from their work, and it says in God's Word that such follies lead to perdition. That Shawlman also did improper things when he was young: as a child he struck a Greek in the Westermarket . . . now he is lazy, pedantic, and sickly, so you see! Don't always then be making jokes with Stern, my boy, *his* father is rich, you must remember. Pretend not to see it when he is making faces at the book-keeper. And when outside the office he is busy making up verses, just casually remark to him that he is very well off being with us, and that Mary has embroidered slippers for him with real floss-silk. Just ask him quite of your own accord, you know! — whether he thinks his father is likely to go to Busselinck & Waterman, and tell him they are tricksters. You see, one owes a warning like that to one's neighbour — I mean you'll put him into the right way by it — and . . . all this verse-making is nonsense. You be good and obedient, Frits, and don't pull the servant by her skirt when she brings tea to the office, and don't put me to shame, for she'll spill the tea, and St. Paul says a son should never cause his father sorrow. I've been

on 'Change for twenty years, and feel justified in saying that I am respected at my pillar. So listen to my exhortations, Frits, and be good, and now get your hat, and put on your coat: and come with me to the prayer-service, that will do you good!"

That's how I talked to him, and I'm convinced that I made an impression on him, especially as the Reverend Twaddler had chosen for the subject of his address: *the love of God manifested to Saul: I Sam. xv: 33b.*

In listening to that sermon I kept thinking what a difference as of day and night there is between human and divine wisdom. I have already said that in Shawlman's parcel, among a lot of trash, there certainly are one or two things that stand out by their soundness of reasoning. But, dear me, what a poor show these things make when compared with such language as that of the Reverend Twaddler! And that is not by his own power — for I know Twaddler, and look upon him as a man who really does not soar high — no, by the power that comes from above. This difference came out the more clearly because he touched upon certain matters that were also dealt with by Shawlman, for, as you have seen, there was much in his parcel about the Javanese and other heathens. Frits says the Javanese are not heathens, but I call anyone a heathen who has a wrong faith. For I hold on to Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, and I feel sure so will every respectable reader.

As I have drawn from Twaddler's address my conclusion with regard to the wrongfulness of abandoning the coffee-culture in *Lebak*, to which I shall again refer presently, and also because as an honest man I do not wish that the reader shall receive nothing for his money, I shall here give a few fragments of the sermon which were most particularly striking.

He had briefly proved God's love from the words of the text quoted, and had quite rapidly passed on to the point that was really the issue, namely the conversion of the Javanese, Malays, and whatever other names those peoples may have. And this is what he said about that subject:

“So then, beloved ones, this was the glorious mission of Israel” — he referred to the extermination of the inhabitants of Canaan — “and this also is the mission of our own Holland! No, it shall not be said that the light which shines upon us will be hidden under the bushel, nor that we are niggardly in sharing with others the bread of eternal life! Cast your glance upon the islands of the Indian Ocean, inhabited by millions upon millions of the children of the rejected son — and of the *rightly* rejected son — of the noble and God-beloved Noah! There they crawl about in the loathsome serpent-holes of heathenish ignorance, there they bow the black and frizzy-haired head under the yoke of self-seeking priests! There they pray to God under invocation of a false prophet, who is an abomination in the sight of the Lord! And, beloved! there are even those who, as though it were not enough to obey a false prophet, there are even those who pray to another God, nay, other *gods*, gods of wood and stone, which they themselves have made after their image, black, horrible, with flat noses, and devilish! Yea, beloved — tears almost prevent me from continuing — deeper even than this is the corruption of the Race of Ham! There are those among them who know *no* God, under whatever name! There are those who deem it sufficient to obey the laws of civic society! Those who deem a harvest song, wherein they express their joy at the success of their labours, as sufficient thanks to the Supreme Being by Whom that harvest was allowed to ripen! Out there live lost ones, my beloved — if so horrible an existence may bear the name of *living*! — out there one finds creatures who hold that it is enough to love wife and child and not to take from their neighbour what is not theirs, in order to be able at night to lay down their heads peacefully to sleep! Do you not shudder at that picture? Do your hearts not shrink with terror at the thoughts of what will be the fate of all these fools, as soon as the trumpet shall sound, waking the dead for the sundering of the just from the unjust? Hear ye not? — yea, ye do hear, for from the text words I have read you have seen that your God is a mighty God, and a

God of just revenge — yea, ye hear the cracking of the bones and the hissing of the flames in the eternal Gehenna where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth! There, there they burn, and perish not, for everlasting is the punishment! There, with never-satiated tongue, the flames lap at the shrieking victims of unbelief. There dies not the worm that gnaws their hearts through and through without ever destroying them, so that for ever there will be a heart to gnaw at in the breast of the godless! See, how the dark skin is stripped from the unbaptized child that, scarce born, has been flung away from the breast of the mother into the pool of everlasting damnation. . . .”

Here a woman fainted.

“But, beloved,” continued the Reverend Twaddler, “God is a God of Love! It is not His will that the sinner shall be lost, but that he may be saved by the Grace, *in Christ, through Faith*! And therefore our Holland has been chosen to save what may be saved of those miserable ones! Therefore has He, in His inscrutable Wisdom, given power to a land of small compass but great and strong in the knowledge of God, power over the dwellers in those regions, that by the holy and ever inestimable Gospel they may be saved from the punishment of hell! The ships of our Holland sail the great waters to bring civilization, religion, Christianity, to the lost Javanese! Nay, our happy fatherland does not covet eternal bliss for itself alone: we wish to share it with the wretched creatures on the distant shores, who lie bound in the fetters of unbelief, superstition, and immorality! The consideration of the duties that are laid upon us to this end will form the seventh part of my address.”

For that which had preceded was the *sixth*. Among the duties we had to fulfil on behalf of those poor heathens were named the following:

- 1° *Giving liberal contributions in money to the Union of Missions.*
- 2° *The support of the Bible Societies, in order to enable them to distribute Bibles in Java.*

- 3° *The promotion of religious meetings in Harderwyck, on behalf of the Colonial Enlistment-Depot.*
- 4° *The writing of sermons and religious hymns, suitable for soldiers and sailors to read and sing to the Javanese.*
- 5° *The formation of a society of influential men, whose task will be to petition our revered King:*
 - a *Only to appoint such Governors, officers and officials as may be considered to stand firm in the true faith.*
 - b *To have permission granted to the Javanese to visit the barracks, and also the men-of-war and merchantmen lying in ports, so that by intercourse with Dutch soldiers and sailors they may be brought up for the Kingdom of God.*
 - c *To prohibit the taking in payment of Bibles or religious tracts in public houses.*
 - d *To make it a provision in the conditions of the opium-concession in Java, that in every opium house there shall be kept a stock of Bibles, in proportion to the probable number of visitors to the institution, and that the concessionary shall undertake to sell no opium without the purchaser taking a religious tract with it.*
 - e *To command that the Javanese shall be led to God by labour.*
- 6° *Giving liberal contributions to the Union of Missions.*

I am aware that I have already given the last item under No. 1, but he repeated it, and in the heat of his discourse such superfluity appeared to me quite explicable.

But, reader, have you noticed No. 5 e? Well, it was just that proposal which reminded me so strongly of the coffee-sales, and of the pretended unsuitability of the soil in *Lebak*, that it will now no longer seem so strange to you when I assure you that since Wednesday night the matter has not been out of my thoughts for a single moment. The Reverend Twaddler read out the Reports of the missionaries, so nobody can deny him a thorough knowledge of these matters. Well then, if he, with those Reports before him,

and his eye fixed on God, maintains that much labour will favourably affect the conquest of the Javanese souls for God's Kingdom, then surely I may conclude that I am not speaking altogether beside the truth when I say that coffee can be perfectly well grown in *Lebak*. And more than this, it is even possible that the Supreme Being has made the soil there unsuitable for coffee-growing for no other purpose than that the population of those parts, through the labour that will be necessary to transport a different soil there, shall become ready to accept salvation.

I do hope my book will come under the eye of the King, and that soon an increase in the sales will testify how closely the knowledge of God is connected with the well-understood interest of the whole middle-class community! Just see how a simple and humble man like Twaddler, devoid of the wisdom of humanity — the man has never set foot in the Exchange — but enlightened by the Gospel, which is a lamp on his path, has suddenly given me, a coffee-broker, a hint which not only is of importance to all Holland, but which will enable me, if Frits behaves himself — he sat fairly still in Church — to retire to Driebergen five years earlier. Yes, labour, labour, that's my watchword! Labour for the Javanese, that's my principle! And my principles are sacred to me.

Is not the Gospel our highest good? Does anything rank above salvation? Is it not then our duty to save those people? And when, as a means thereto, labour is necessary — I myself have laboured on 'Change for twenty years — may we then refuse labour to the Javanese, knowing that his soul is so pressingly in need of it to escape the burning fire hereafter? It would be selfishness, shameful selfishness, if we did not make every effort to guard those poor erring ones against the terrible future the Reverend Twaddler has so eloquently described. A lady fainted when he spoke of that black child . . . perhaps she had a little boy who was somewhat dusky. Women are like that!

And ought not I to insist upon labour, I who do nothing but think of business from morning until eve? Is not even this book

— which Stern is making such an annoyance to me — proof of my sincere good wishes for the welfare of our fatherland, proof of how I would sacrifice everything to that? And when I have to labour so hard, *I* who was baptized — in the Amstel-street Church — may one not then exact from the Javanese that he, who still has to win his salvation, shall put his hand to the plough?

If that Association — I mean for 5 *e* — is formed, I'll join. And I shall also try to persuade the Rosemeyers, as the sugar-refiners are also interested, although I don't think they are too "all right" in their ideas — I mean the Rosemeyers — for they have a Roman Catholic servant.

Anyhow, *I'll* do my duty. This I promised myself when I went home from the prayer-meeting with Frits. In my house the Lord shall be served, *I* shall see to that. And this with all the more zeal, as I see more and more how wisely everything is arranged, how loving are the ways by which we are led at God's hand, and how He wishes to save us both for the eternal and the temporal life; for the soil at *Lebak* can perfectly well be made suitable for coffee-culture.



CHAPTER X

ALTHOUGH I spare no one when principles are at stake, yet it is obvious that with Stern I must adopt a different course from the one I have taken with Frits, and as it must be anticipated that my name — the firm is *Last & Co.*, but my name is *Drystubble: Bata-vus Drystubble* — will be connected with a book containing matters which are not in accord with the respect that every decent man and broker owes to himself, I deem it my duty to inform you how I have endeavoured to bring this Stern back to the right way.

I have not spoken to him of the Lord — for he is a Lutheran — but I have made an appeal to his heart and his honour. Just see how I have managed it, and you may note how much we can do with a knowledge of men. I have heard him say: “On my word of honour,” and I asked him what he meant by that.

“Well,” he said, “that I pledge my honour for the truth of what I say.”

“That’s a good deal,” I went on. “Are you so sure that you always speak the truth?”

“Yes,” he declared, “from the truth I never swerve. When my breast glows . . .”

The reader knows the rest.

“That certainly is very fine,” I said, and I looked quite innocent, as though I believed it.

But this is just where I had set a clever trap for him, with the object — without risking the danger of seeing old Stern fall into the hands of Busselinck & Waterman — the object of putting this young brat in his proper place for once, and making him feel the enormous distance there is between an absolute beginner — even

if his father does do business on a large scale — and a broker who has been on 'Change for twenty years.

I must tell you that I knew he had learnt by heart — he says "outwardly" — all sorts of verse-trash, and as verses always contain lies, I was sure that sooner or later I should catch him in an untruth. Nor was it long before I did. I was sitting in the morning-room, and he was in the drawing-room . . . for we have a drawing-room. Mary was knitting, and he was just going to tell her something. I listened attentively, and when he had finished, I asked him whether he had the book from which he had read the thing he had just droned. He said yes, and brought it to me. It was a part of the works of a man named Heine. The day after I gave him — I mean Stern — the following:

*Reflections on the love of truth in a person who recites
the subjoined trash of Heine's to a young girl who is knitting
in the drawing-room.*

On wings of song I lift thee,
Heart's love, and bear thee afar,

Heart's love? Mary, *your Heart's love?* Do your old people know of that, and Louisa Rosemeyer? Is it decent to say this to a child that quite readily may become disobedient to her mother through it, as she may take it into her head that she is of age, when someone calls her *Heart's love*? What does it mean: *bearing her on wings*? You have no wings, and your song hasn't either. Just try to cross the Laurier Canal, which isn't even very wide. But even if you had wings, are you at liberty to propose such things to a young girl who has not yet been confirmed? And even if the child were a full member of the Church, what is the meaning of that offer to fly away together? Fie!

Where Ganges' waters flow swiftly,
And valleys enchanted are.

Then why don't you go there alone and hire a flat? but don't take a young girl with you whose duty it is to help her mother in

the household! But you don't really mean it! First of all you have never seen the Ganges, and so you cannot know whether it is nice living there. Shall *I* just tell you how matters stand? It's all lies, which you only tell for the one reason that in this whole versification you make yourself the slave of metre and rhyme. If the first line had ended in *ham, scone, guava*, there would have been no Ganges to flow swiftly, but you would have asked Mary whether she would have come with you to *Schiedam, Toulon, Java*, and so on. So you see that the proposed route of your journey was not meant seriously or sincerely, and that the whole affair resolves itself into a silly singsong of words without sense or object. What would happen, do you think, if Mary just took it into her head to want to make that mad journey? I am not even now speaking of the uncomfortable mode of travelling you suggest! But she is, thank Heaven, too sensible to long for a country about which you say:

A blossom-red garden glistens
 Beneath the silent moon;
 The lotus pensively listens:
 Dear sister is coming soon!
 The violets starward gazing,
 Are lisping and laughing content,
 The roses tell secrets amazing,
 And fairy-tales sweet as their scent.

What would you want to do with Mary in that garden by moonlight, Stern? Is that moral, is it decent, is it respectable? Do you wish me to have to be ashamed of myself, like Busselinck & Waterman, with whom no self-respecting firm wants to have anything to do, because their daughter has run away, and because they are tricksters? What should I be compelled to answer, if they were to ask me on 'Change why my daughter stayed in that red garden such a long time? For surely you understand that no one would believe me if I said that she had to be there to pay a visit to the lotus-flowers, which, as you say, have already expected her a long time. And in the same way every sane person would laugh at me

if I were foolish enough to say: Mary is in that red garden over there — why, by the way, *red*, and not *yellow*, or *mauve*? — to listen to the chattering and giggling of the violets or to the fairy-tales which the roses are secretly pouring into each other's ears. Even if such a thing *could* be true, what good would it be to Mary, if after all it happens so secretly that she wouldn't understand a word of it? But it's all lies, silly lies! And not even pretty ones, for you just take a pencil and draw a rose with an ear, and see what it looks like! And what does it mean that those fairy-tales are so like scent? Shall *I* just tell you in good round Dutch? It means that there is a bad odour about those silly fairy-tales . . . that's what it is!

There skip the gazelles before us,
With sage, devout eyes agleam,
And murmurs afar sonorous
The wave of the sacred stream.
There softly, so softly sinking
Where palm-trees rustle above,
Dreamlike we shall be drinking
The peace and rapture of love.

Cannot you go to *Artis*¹ — you have written to your father that I am a member, haven't you? — now think, can you not be suited in *Artis*, if you want to see strange animals at any price? Must it be absolutely those gazelles on the Ganges, which in any case you can never observe so well in their wild state as in a neat enclosure of coal-tarred iron? Why do you call those animals devout and sage? The latter description may pass — they, at any rate, don't make such absurd verses — but *devout*! What does it mean? Isn't it abusing a sacred expression that should only be used for people of the true faith? And that sacred stream? Are you justified in telling Mary things that will make her a heathen? Are you justified in shaking her in the conviction that there is no holy water but that of baptism, and no sacred river but Jordan? Isn't this sapping

¹ The zoological gardens in Amsterdam.

the foundations of morality, virtue, religion, Christianity, and respectability?

I want you to ponder all this, Stern! Your father is an honourable firm, and I feel sure that he approves of my appealing in this way to your better feelings, also that he prefers to do business with a man who stands for virtue and religion. Yes, principles are sacred to me, and I have no hesitation in saying frankly what I mean. So you needn't make any secret of what I am saying to you, you may freely write to your father that you are here with a reliable family, and that I am thus showing you the way of righteousness. And you may safely ask yourself what would have become of you if you had fallen into the hands of Busselinck & Waterman. There also you would have recited such verses, but there no one would have tried to influence you, for they are tricksters. You may freely write this to your father, for when principles are at stake I spare no one. There the girls would have gone along with you to the Ganges, and then you would probably now be lying there under that tree in the wet grass, whilst now, as *I* have given you such paternal warning, you may remain with us in a respectable house. Write all this to your father, and tell him how grateful you are that you have come to us, and that I look after you so well, and that the daughter of Busselinck & Waterman has run away, and give him my kind regards, and tell him that I will drop another 1/16 per cent discount below their offer, as I can bear no scabs, who would steal the bread out of their rival's mouth by more favourable conditions.

And do please me, when you give the readings from Shawlman's parcel, by bringing in a little more solid matter. I have seen quotes in it with regard to the coffee-culture, for the past twenty years, from all the Residencies of Java: read a little of *that* kind of thing! You see, then the Rosemeyers, who are in sugar, may hear a little of what really goes on in the world. And also you must not make out that the girls and all of us are cannibals that have swallowed something of yours . . . that's not respectable, my dear

boy. Do believe a man who surely knows what goes on in the world! I have served your father from before his birth — I mean his firm, no . . . our firm, I mean: *Last & Co.* — formerly it was *Last & Meyer*, but the *Meyers* have been out of it a long time — so you will understand that I have the best intentions towards you. And do urge Frits to behave better, and don't teach him to write verses, and pretend not to see it when he makes faces at the book-keeper, and all that sort of thing. Set him a good example, as you are so much older, and try to inculcate composure and the stately manner of a fine gentleman in him, for he must become a broker.

I am your paternal friend,
Batavus Drystubble,
(Firm, *Last & Co.*, *coffee-brokers.*)
Laurier Canal, No. 37.



CHAPTER XI

So I just wish to say, in the words of Abraham Blankaart, that I consider this chapter "essential," because, I think, it gives a better knowledge of Havelaar, who once and for all appears to be the hero of the story.

"Tine, what kind of *ketimon*¹ is this? My dear girl, never put plant-acid with fruit! Cucumbers with salt, pineapples with salt, Indian oranges with salt, all that comes out of the soil with salt; vinegar with fish and meat . . . there is something about this in Liebig . . ."

"Dear Max," Tine asked with a laugh, "how long do you think we have been here? That *ketimon* is Mrs. Slotering's."

And Havelaar had to make an effort to remember that he had only arrived the day before, and that with the best possible intentions Tine could not yet have arranged anything for the kitchen or the household. He himself had already been a long time at *Rangkas-Betoong*! Had he not spent the whole night reading in the archives, and had not too much already passed through his soul in connection with *Lebak*, for him to know straightway like this that he had only been there since yesterday? Tine perfectly understood this: *she* always understood him. *

"Of course, you are right," he said. "But in any case you really must read something of Liebig's. Verbrugge, have *you* read much of Liebig?"

"Who is he?" asked Verbrugge.

"He is a man who has written a good deal about pickling gherkins. He also discovered how one may change grass into wool . . . you understand, don't you?"

¹ Gherkins.

"No," said Verbrugge and Duclari together.

"Well, the thing itself was of course always known: send a sheep into a paddock . . . and you will see what happens. But he has investigated the manner in which it happens. Other sages again say that he knows little about it. Now they are trying to find out the means of omitting the whole sheep from the operation¹ . . . Oh, those savants! Molière knew all about them . . . I like Molière very much. If you like we'll arrange a course of evening readings, a couple of times a week. Tine will join, after Max has gone to bed."

Duclari and Verbrugge liked the idea. Havelaar said that he had not many books, but among them were Schiller, Goethe, Heine, Vondel, Lamartine, Thiers, Say, Malthus, Scialoja, Smith, Shakespeare, Byron . . .

Verbrugge said that he did not read English.

"The deuce! aren't you over thirty? What have you been doing all that time? But surely that must have been rather difficult for you at *Padang*, where so much English is spoken. Did you know Miss *Mata-api*?"

"No, I don't know the name."

"It wasn't her name either. But they called her that in 1843, because she had such sparkling eyes. I suppose she is married by now . . . it's already so long ago! Never did I see anything like it . . . yes, I did, after all, at Arles . . . you ought to go there one of these days! It's the most beautiful thing I have found in all my travels. There is nothing, I think, that brings before you so clearly beauty in the abstract, the visible image of *truth*, of *immaterial purity*, as a beautiful woman. Believe me, just go to Arles and Nîmes . . ."

Duclari, Verbrugge and — I must admit it! — also Tine, could not suppress a loud laugh at the thought of just crossing over from the Western extreme of Java to Arles or Nîmes in the south of France. Havelaar, standing no doubt in his imagination on the

¹ Surely the first mention of "synthetic wool" in literature! *Trsl.*

tower built by the Saracens on the enclosure of the *arena* at Arles, had to make an effort to understand the cause of that laugh, and then continued:

"Well, of course, I mean . . . if you should happen to be in that neighbourhood. I never met anything like it elsewhere. I had become used to disappointment on seeing the things that were cracked up so much. For instance, you go and see the Falls that people speak and write about so much. Personally, I have felt little or nothing at Tondano, Maros, Schaffhausen, and Niagara. One has to consult one's guide-book to have the necessary measure of admiration handy about 'so many feet of water-fall' and 'so many cubic feet of water a minute,' and if the figures are high, one has to say: 'Heavens!' I never want to see any more falls, at least not if I have to go out of my way for them. Those things say nothing to me! Buildings speak to me somewhat louder, especially when they are pages of history. But in this there speaks a feeling of a very different nature! One calls up the past, and the shades of days gone by pass in review. Among them there are most horrible ones, and so, however interesting this may be at times, the emotions evoked do not always afford satisfaction to one's sense of beauty . . . never, at any rate, unmixed! And *without* the appeal of history there may be much beauty in some buildings, but it is usually spoilt by guides — whether of paper or of flesh and bone, it's all the same! — guides who steal your impression by their monotonous: 'This chapel was erected by the Bishop of Munster in 1223 . . . the columns are 63 feet high and rest upon' . . . I don't know what and I don't care either. That babbling is a bore, for one feels that one has to get up exactly three and sixty feet of admiration, in order not to pass in the eyes of some people for a Vandal or a Commercial Traveller . . . and those *are* a race!"

"The Vandals?"

"No, the others. Well, one may say: keep your guide in your pocket if he is a printed one, and leave him outside or tell him to

be silent in the other case; but besides the fact that for more or less right judgment one really does often require information, one would in any case, even if one *could* always do without the information, seek in vain in any building that which satisfies one's longing for beauty more than a very short moment, because a building *lacks movement*. I think this also applies to sculpture and painting. Nature is movement. Growth, hunger, thought, feeling, they all are movement . . . rest is death! Without movement no pain, no joy, no emotion! You try to sit still without stirring, and you will find how quickly you make a spooky impression on everyone else and even on your own imagination. Even in seeing the most beautiful 'living statues,' one soon longs for the next number, however glorious may have been the initial impression. Now since our thirst for beauty is not slaked by one single glance of a beautiful thing, but is an imperative need for a series of successive glances, that is for *the movement of the beautiful*, we suffer from an unsatisfied craving in contemplating *that* class of art-works, and for this reason I maintain that a beautiful woman, unless she be a portrait-beauty without real movement, comes nearest to the ideal of the divine. We soon feel how great is the need for movement when a dancer, let her be Elsler or Taglioni, after a dance stands still on her left leg and grins at the public."

"This does not count here," said Verbrugge, "for this is *absolutely* ugly."

"I agree. Yet *she* gives it as beautiful, and as the climax to all that preceded, in which there may in reality have been much beauty. She gives it as 'the point' of the epigram, as the '*aux armes!*' of the *Marseillaise* which she has sung with her feet, as the whisper of the willows upon the grave of a love she has just lamented in dance. Oh, it's repulsive! And that the spectators also, who usually, like all of us more or less, fashion their taste on custom and imitation, consider that movement as the most thrilling, is proved by the fact that then they burst into applause, as if they wished to say: All that preceded was certainly very fine also, but

now we can absolutely no longer contain our admiration! You said that final *pose* was *absolutely* ugly — I say so too — but what is the reason? It is because the *movement* ceased, and with it the *story* the dancer told. Believe me, immobility is death!”

“But,” advanced Duclari, “you have also rejected waterfalls as an expression of beauty. Yet waterfalls *move*!”

“Yes, only . . . without a *story*! They move, but don’t get away from the place. They move like a rocking-horse, without even the *va et vient*. They make a sound, but do not speak. They cry: *hrrroo . . . hrrroo . . . hrrroo . . .* and never anything else! You cry for six thousand years or longer: *hrrroo, hrrroo . . .* and then see how few people will look upon you as an entertaining man.”

“I won’t put it to the test,” said Duclari. “But I still am not quite convinced that the movement you demand is so absolutely indispensable. I give in about the waterfalls, but surely, I think, a good *painting* may express much.”

“Undoubtedly, not only for one moment. I’ll try to explain my meaning by an example. To-day is the 18th of February . . .”

“Certainly not,” said Verbrugge, “we are still in January . . .”

“No, no, to-day is the 18th of February, 1587, and you are locked up in Fotheringay Castle . . .”

“I?” asked Duclari, who thought he had not clearly understood.

“Yes, you. You are bored and seek diversion. The wall over there has an opening in it, but it is too high for you to see through it, and yet that’s what you wish to do. You put your table beneath it, and on it a stool with only three legs, one of which is rather weak. You once at a fair saw an acrobat who placed seven chairs on top of one another, and then himself on top head downwards. Conceit and boredom both urge you to do something similar. With tottering effort you climb that stool . . . achieve your object . . . cast a glance through the opening, and exclaim: ‘O, God!’ Then you fall down! Now can you tell me why you exclaimed: ‘O, God!’ and why you fell?”

"I suppose the third leg of the stool broke," said Verbrugge sententiously.

"Ah, well, that leg may have broken; but it was not this that made you fall. That leg broke because you fell. Before any other opening you would have held out on that stool a whole year; but here you *had* to fall, even if the stool had had thirteen legs, nay, even if you had stood on the floor."

"I am agreeable," said Duclari. "I see that you have made up your mind to make me come down *coûte que coûte*. I am now lying down full length . . . but I really don't know why."

"Well, now, this all the same is quite simple! You suddenly saw a woman attired in black, kneeling down before a block. And she bowed her head, and white as silver was the neck that shone against the black velvet. And near by stood a man with a large sword, and he held it up high, and his eye gazed on that white neck, and he mentally traced the arc his sword would describe, so that there . . . there between those vertebræ it would be driven in with precision and force . . . and then you fell, Duclari. You fell because you saw all this, and therefore you exclaimed: 'O, God!' In no way because there were only three legs to your stool. And long after you had been set free from Fotheringay — I should imagine through the intermediation of your cousin, or because the people got tired of keeping you there longer free of charge, without their being obliged to do so, like a canary — long after, even to this very day, you still dream waking of that woman, and in your sleep you suddenly start awake, and fall down on your couch with a heavy thud, because you are trying to seize the arm of the executioner. Is it not so?"

"I'm ready to believe it, but I really cannot say definitely, as I have never looked through a hole in the wall at Fotheringay."

"Right, right! Neither have I. But now I take a painting representing the decapitation of Mary Stuart. We'll assume that the presentation is perfect. There it hangs, in a gilt frame, by a red cord, if you like . . . I know what you are going to say, all right!

No, no, you do not see that frame, you even forget that you have given up your cane at the entrance of the picture-gallery . . . you forget your name, your child, the latest model forage-cap, *everything* therefore, in order to see, not a *picture*, but to behold there in very truth Mary Stuart: *in every way exactly* as at Fotheringay. The executioner stands there absolutely as he must have stood in reality, I will even go so far as to assume that you put out your hand to ward off the blow! So far that you exclaim: 'Let the woman live, perhaps she will mend her ways!' You see, I give your *beau jeu* as regards the execution of the picture. . . ."

"Yes, but then what next? Is not then the impression just as striking as when I saw the same scene in reality in Fotheringay?"

"No, most decidedly not; and that only because this time you did not climb on top of a stool with three legs. You take a stool — on this occasion with four legs, and for choice an easy chair — you sit down before the picture so that you may enjoy long and thoroughly — we do, strange though it seems, *enjoy* the spectacle of horrible things — and what impression do you think it will make on you?"

"Well, terror, fear, pity, emotion . . . just as when I looked through the opening in the wall. We have assumed that the picture is *perfect*, I must therefore receive from it entirely the same impression as from the real thing."

"No! within two minutes you feel a pain in your right arm, out of sympathy with the executioner who has to hold up that heavy piece of steel so long without moving."

"*Sympathy with the executioner?*"

"Yes! *fellow-suffering, community of feeling*, you know! And likewise with the woman who has to lie there in front of that block such a long time, in an uncomfortable attitude, and probably in a disagreeable frame of mind. You still have pity for her, but not, now, because she has to be decapitated, but because one keeps her waiting so long *before* she is decapitated; and if you still would say or exclaim anything in the end — assuming that you feel an

impulse to interfere in the matter — it would be nothing more than: ‘For goodness’ sake strike, my good man, the woman is waiting for it!’ And if afterwards you again see the picture, and see it again *often*, then your *first* impression will even have become this: ‘Isn’t this business finished yet? Is he still standing and is she still lying there?’ ”

“But then what movement is there in the beauty of the women at Arles?” asked Verbrugge.

“Oh, that is quite a different thing! They *enact* a whole period of history in their features. Carthage flourishes and builds ships on their brow . . . hear Hannibal’s oath against Rome . . . see, they are twining strings for their bows . . . see, the town is on fire.”

“Max, Max, I really believe you lost your heart at Arles,” teased Tine.

“Yes, for a moment . . . but I found it again: you shall hear. Just imagine . . . I do not say, I have there seen a woman whose beauty was this or the other, no: they were all beautiful, and so it was an impossibility there to fall in love *pour tout de bon*, because every next one again supplanted the previous one in your admiration, and I really thought at the time of Caligula or Tiberius — who is it again they tell this fable about? — who wished that the whole human race had only one head. For it was in this way the wish came to me that the women of Arles . . .”

“Might have but one head?”

“Yes . . .”

“In order to cut it off?”

“Of course not! In order to . . . kiss it on the brow, I was going to say, but yet that’s not it! No, to gaze at it, to dream of it, and . . . *to be good!*”

Duclari and Verbrugge probably again thought this conclusion very peculiar. But Max did not notice their surprise, and continued:

“For so noble were the features, that one felt something like shame to be only a human being, and not a spark . . . a beam —

no, that would still be matter! — a thought! But . . . then all at once a brother or a father would be sitting by the side of those women, and . . . so help me God, I saw one who blew her nose!”

“Didn’t I know that you would again draw a black line across it!” said Tine, vexed.

“Is that *my* fault? *I* should have preferred to see her fall down dead! May such a woman desecrate herself?”

“But surely, Mr. Havelaar,” asked Verbrugge, “suppose she had a cold?”

“Well, she *should* not have had a cold with such a nose!”

“Yes, but . . .”

Just then, as though Old Nick took a hand in the game, Tine suddenly felt that she must sneeze, and . . . before she could stop herself she had blown her nose!

“Max, my dear boy, don’t be cross!” she begged with a half-restrained laugh.

He did not answer. And, however foolish it may seem or be . . . yes, he *was* cross about it! And what will sound strange also, Tine was pleased that he was cross, and that therefore he demanded more from *her* than from the Phocean women of Arles, even though it was not because she had cause to be proud of her nose.

If Duclari still thought that Havelaar was “mad,” one could not have blamed him for feeling confirmed in that opinion on noticing the momentary irritation which, after and on account of that nose-blowing, was to be read on Havelaar’s face. But the latter had come back from Carthage and now read — with the celerity with which he *could* read when his mind was not too far away from home — on the faces of his guests that they were setting up the following two theses:

- 1° *He who does not wish his wife to blow her nose is a fool.*
- 2° *He who thinks that a nose cut in beautiful lines may not be blown is mistaken in applying this opinion to Mrs. Havelaar, whose nose is slightly pomme de terre.*

The first thesis Havelaar left alone, but . . . the second!

"Oh," he exclaimed, as if he had to reply, although his guests had been too polite to express their theses, "I'll explain. Tine is . . ."

"Dear Max!" she said deprecatingly.

This meant: "For heaven's sake don't tell these gentlemen why in your estimation I should be exalted above colds!"

Havelaar seemed to understand what Tine meant, for he answered:

"All right, my child! But, gentlemen, do you know that one is often mistaken in judging the claims of some people to the right of physical imperfection?"

I am certain that the guests had never heard of those claims.

"I knew in Sumatra a girl," he went on, "the daughter of a *datoo*.¹ Well, now, I held that *she* had no right to this imperfection. And yet I saw her fall into the water during a shipwreck . . . just like any other person. I, a human being, had to help her ashore."

"But . . . did you want her to be able to fly like a sea-mew?"

"Certainly, or . . . no, she ought to have had no body. Shall I tell you how I made her acquaintance? It was in '42. I was Controller of *Natal*² . . . were you ever there, Verbrugge?"

"Yes."

"Well, then you know that they grow pepper there. The pepper-gardens are situated at *Taloh-Baleh*, to the north of *Natal*, on the coast. I had to inspect them, and as I had no knowledge of pepper, I took with me in the *prao* a *datoo*, who knew more about it. His daughter, then a child of thirteen, came with us. We sailed along the coast, and had a tedious journey . . ."

"And then you were shipwrecked?"

"Not at all, the weather was fine, too fine. The shipwreck you are thinking of took place much later. Otherwise I should not have

¹ Native Chief.

² Natal in Sumatra.

been bored. We sailed along the coast, and it was boiling hot. A *prao* does not offer much opportunity for diversion, and in addition I happened to be in a doleful mood, contributed to by many causes. First of all, I had an unhappy love, secondly, an . . . unhappy love, thirdly . . . well, something else of the same kind, etc. Ah, well, that's in the nature of things. But moreover I chanced to be at a point between two attacks of ambition. I had made myself a king and had been dethroned again. I had climbed the tower and had fallen to the ground. . . . I shall pass over this time how it all came about! Enough, I was sitting in this *prao* with a sour face and in a bad humour, and was what the Germans call 'unenjoyable.' Amongst other things I considered that it was not right and proper to make me inspect pepper-gardens, and that long ago I ought to have been appointed Governor of a solar system. Then also it appeared to me a sort of mental murder to place a mind like mine in one *prao* with this stupid *datoo* and his child.

"I may add, though, that otherwise I liked the Malay Chiefs, and got on with them very well. They even have much in their composition that makes me prefer them to the Javanese Grandees. Yes, I know, Verbrugge, that in this you do not agree with me, and there are but few people who admit that I am right in having such an opinion . . . but we won't discuss that point now.

"If I had made that trip on another day — with fewer cobwebs in my head, I mean — I should probably have at once entered into conversation with the *datoo*, and perhaps I should have found that he was well worth my cultivation. Probably also I should then have induced the little girl to talk, and this might have entertained and amused me, for in a child there usually is some originality . . . although I must admit that I was still too much of a child myself to be interested in originality. This is different now. Now I see in every girl of thirteen a manuscript in which as yet but little or nothing has been erased. One surprises the author in undress, and this is often quite pretty.

"The child was stringing beads on a cord, and seemed to need all her attention for this. Three red ones, one black . . . three red ones, one black: it was pretty!

"Her name was *Si Oopi Keteh*. This in Sumatra means approximately *little lady* . . . yes, Verbrugge, you know it, but Duclari has always served in Java. Her name was *Si Oopi Keteh*, but in my mind I called her 'poor thing,' or something like it, as in my estimate I was so infinitely exalted above her.

"It was late afternoon . . . nearly evening, and the beads were put away. The land moved slowly away alongside us, smaller and smaller grew the *Ophir* behind us to the right. To the left, in the West, above the wide wide sea that has no limit until it meets Madagascar, and behind it Africa, the sun was sinking, and made his beams play ducks and drakes on the waves in curves that grew more obtuse every moment: he sought coolness in the sea. How the deuce did that thing run again?"

"What thing . . . the sun?"

"No, no . . . I used to make up verses in those days! Oh, delicious ones! Just listen: —

'You ask me why the Ocean-wave
That steeps Natal's wild shore,
So gentle when on other strands,
There ever bursts upon the sands
With turbulent rush and roar!

'You ask, and yon poor fisher-lad
No sooner hears you speak,
But Westward to the unmeasured space
Rise his dark eyes and seem to face
The distant climes they seek.

'He lifts the gaze of his dark eyes,
Westward their glances flee,
And when your own stray round, he shows
'Tis water, boundless water flows,
Always the sea, the sea!

'And thence the Ocean-swell here scours
 So fiercely bank and beach:
 For sea alone would meet your gaze,
 Could it o'er endless water-ways
 To Madagascar reach!

'And many a sacrifice was made
 The Ocean's wrath to still,
 And many a cry was doomed to ascend,
 Unheard by wife, or child, or friend,
 And known but to God's will!

'And many a hand rose from the deep,
 A last despairing quest,
 And groped and caught and splashed around
 To feel if yet support be found,
 And sank on Death's cold breast!

'And . . . '

"And . . . and . . . *I have forgot the rest.*"

"That may be found again by writing for it to Krygsman, your clerk at *Natal*. He has it," said Verbrugge.

"Where did *he* get it?" asked Max.

"Perhaps from your waste-paper-basket. But he certainly has it! Isn't what follows the legend of the first sin, through which the island that formerly protected the roadstead of *Natal* sank? The story of *Djiva* and the two brothers?"

"Yes, that is so. That legend . . . was no legend. It was a parable I made up and which within a couple of centuries will probably become a legend if Krygsman drones out that thing too often. That was the beginning of all mythologies. *Djiva* is *soul*, as you know, *soul*, *spirit*, or something of the kind. I made it a woman, the indispensable naughty Eve . . ."

"Well, Max, what becomes of our little lady with her beads?" asked Tine.

"The beads were packed away. It was six o'clock, and there on

the equator — *Natal* lies a few minutes north of it: whenever I went overland to *Ayer-Bangie*, I had to make my horse step across the Line . . . it made one liable to stumble over it, on my soul! — there on the equator six o'clock was the signal for evening meditations. Now it seems to me that at night one is always a little better, or rather less mischievous, than in the morning, and this is natural. In the morning one pulls oneself together — one is . . . sheriff's officer or Controller, or . . . no, this is not enough! A sheriff's officer pulls himself together to do his duty with a vengeance that day . . . good God! what a duty! What must that heart look like, pulled together! A Controller — I don't say this for you, Verbrugge! — a Controller rubs his eyes, dislikes the job of meeting the new Assistant-Resident, who wants to assume an absurd superiority, on the strength of an extra year's service, and of whom he has heard so many eccentric things . . . in Sumatra. Or that day he has to measure paddocks, and wavers between his honesty — you don't know this, Duclari, as you are a soldier, but there really are honest Controllers! — then he stands hesitating between that honesty and the fear that *Radhen Dhemang* this one or the other may ask him to return the piebald that is so good at *counting*. Or else that day he will have to say firmly *yes* or *no* to missive number anything. Briefly, on awakening in the morning the whole world lies on your heart, and that's heavy for a heart, however strong. But at night there is a pause. There are ten full hours between now and the moment one will have to face one's coat again. Ten hours: thirty-six thousand seconds to be a human being in the true sense! This looks rosy to anyone. This is the moment in which I hope to die, in order to arrive yonder with an unofficial countenance. This is the moment when your wife again finds in your face the something that *took* her when she allowed you to keep that pocket handkerchief with a crowned E in the corner . . .”

“And when she had not yet acquired the right to have a cold,” said Tine.

"Now then, don't tease! I only want to say that at night one feels more genial.

"Now when, as I said, the sun slowly vanished," Havelaar went on, "I became a better human being. And it may be counted as the first sign of this improvement that I said to the little lady:

" 'It will soon be a little cooler now.'

" 'Yes, *toowan!*'¹ she replied.

"But I bowed my highness still lower to that 'poor thing,' and started a conversation with her. My merit was the greater as she answered very little. I was agreed with in all I said . . . a thing which also grows tedious though one may be ever so conceited.

" 'Would you like to come again next time to *Taloh Baleh?*' I asked.

" 'As the *toowan commander* will decide.'

" 'No, I ask *you* whether *you* think a trip like this pleasant.'

" 'If my father wishes it,' she answered. I ask you, gentlemen, was it not enough to drive one mad! Well, all the same, I did not go mad. The sun was down, and I felt genial enough not to be put off by so much stupidity. Or rather I believe I began to take a pleasure in hearing my voice — there are few among us who are not fond of listening to themselves — but after my taciturnity of the whole day it seemed to me that, having at last started speaking, I deserved something better than the two silly answers of *Si Oopi Keteh*.

"I'll tell her a fairy tale, I thought, then I shall at the same time hear it myself, and there is no need for her to answer me. Now you know that, just as in unloading a ship the last *Krandjang*² of sugar put in will be the first to come out again, so we also usually first unload the thought or story that was put into our mind last. In the 'Magazine for Netherlands India' I had shortly before read a story by 'Jeronimus': 'The Japanese Stone-cutter' . . .

"I may tell you that this 'Jeronimus' has written some charm-

¹ Master.

² Bamboo basket.

ing things! Did you ever read his 'Sale in a death-house'! and his 'Graves'! and, above all: 'Pedatti'?¹ I'll give you that.

"Well, I had just read 'The Japanese Stone-cutter.' Oh, I say, I now suddenly remember how a moment ago I lost my way to that poem in which I let the fisher-lad screw his 'dark eye' round in one direction till he must have squinted! That was a concatenation of ideas. My annoyance on that day was connected with the dangers of the *Natal* roadstead . . . you know, Verbrugge, that no man-of-war is allowed to enter that part of the sea, especially in July . . . you see, Duclari, the west monsoon is strongest there in July, just the reverse of here. Well, the dangers of those waters connected themselves with my thwarted ambition, and this ambition again is connected with that poem about *Djiva*. I had repeatedly proposed to the Resident at *Natal* to make a breakwater, or otherwise an artificial harbour in the mouth of the river, with the object of bringing trade to the Division of *Natal*, which connects the important Battahlands with the sea. A million and a half of people in the interior did not know what to do with their products because the roadstead of *Natal* was rightly in such bad odour. Well, these proposals had not been approved by the Resident, or at least he maintained that the Government would not approve them, and you know that well-trained Residents never recommend anything but what they can tell beforehand will appeal to the Government. Making a harbour at *Natal* was in principle opposed to the system of the closed door, and so far from wishing to invite ships, it was even prohibited, except in cases of *force majeure*, to admit sailing ships to the roadstead. If in spite of this a ship happened to come—it was mostly American whalers or French ships that had loaded pepper in the independent little realms at the Northern point—I always got the Captain to write me a letter in which he asked leave to store drinking-water. My annoyance at the failure of my efforts to achieve something to the

¹ Javanese car.

advantage of *Natal*, or rather my wounded vanity — wasn't it very hard that I still counted so little as not to be able to have a harbour constructed where I wanted it? — Well, then, all this, in connection with my candidature for the regulation of a solar system, had that day made me so unamiable. When the sunset cured me a little — for discontentedness is an illness — it was exactly that illness which reminded me of 'The Japanese Stone-cutter,' and perhaps it was only for one reason that I thought that story aloud: namely, that, making myself believe that I did it out of kindness towards the child, I could thus on the sly take the last dose of medicine I felt I needed. But she, the child, cured me — for some days at least — better than my story, which must approximately have run thus: —

“ ‘*Oopi*, there was a man who cut stones out of the rock. His labour was very heavy, and he laboured much, but his wages were slender, and he was not contented.

“ ‘He sighed because his labour was heavy. And he exclaimed: “Oh, that I were rich, so that I might rest on a *baleh-baleh*¹ with red silk *klamboos*!”²

“ ‘And there came an angel from heaven, and said: “Be it unto thee as thou hast said!”

“ ‘And he *was* rich. And he rested on a *baleh-baleh* and the *klamboos* was of red silk.

“ ‘And the king of the land passed by, with horsemen in front of his car. And behind the car also there were horsemen, and the golden *payong*³ was held above the head of the king.

“ ‘And when the rich man saw this, he was vexed that no golden *payong* was held above *his* head. And he was not contented.

“ ‘He sighed, and exclaimed: “I wish I were a king!”

“ ‘And there came an angel from heaven, and said: “Be it unto thee as thou hast said!”

¹ Bamboo couch.

² Curtain.

³ Sunshade.

“ ‘And he *was* a king. And in front of his car rode many horsemen, and behind his car also there were horsemen, and above his head the golden *payong* was held.

“ ‘And the sun shone with burning beams, and scorched the earth, so that the grassblades withered.

“ ‘And the king murmured that the sun burnt his face, and had power above him. And he was not contented.

“ ‘He sighed, and exclaimed: “I wish I were the sun!”

“ ‘And there came an angel from heaven, and said: “Be it unto thee as thou hast said.”

“ ‘And he *was* the sun. And he sent his beams upward and downward, to right and left, and all round.

“ ‘And he scorched the grassblades on the earth, and the faces of the kings that were on the earth.

“ ‘And a cloud placed itself between him and the earth, and it threw back the beams of the sun.

“ ‘And he grew wroth that his power was resisted, and he murmured that the cloud had power above him. And he was not contented.

“ ‘He wished to be the cloud, which was so powerful.

“ ‘And there came an angel from heaven and said: “Be it unto thee as thou hast said.”

“ ‘And he became a cloud, and placed himself between the sun and the earth, and caught the sunbeams, so that the grass grew green.

“ ‘And the cloud rained in large drops on the earth, and made the rivers swell, and *banjirs* ¹ carried away the herds.

“ ‘And the volume of his waters destroyed the fields.

“ ‘And he fell upon a rock, which yielded not. And he plashed down in great streams, but the rock yielded not.

“ ‘And he waxed wroth because the rock would not yield, and because the strength of his streams was useless. And he was not contented.

¹ Floods.

“ ‘He cried: “To that rock power has been given above me! I wish I were that rock!”

“ ‘And there came an angel from heaven and said: “Be it unto thee as thou hast said!”

“ ‘And he *became* a rock, and moved not when the sun shone, nor when it rained.

“ ‘And there came a man with a mattock and a pickaxe and a heavy hammer, and he hewed stones out of the rock.

“ ‘And the rock said: “What is this, that the man has power over me, and can hew stones out of my bosom?” And he was not contented.

“ ‘He cried: “I am weaker than this one . . . I wish I were this man!”

“ ‘And there came an angel from heaven, and said: “Be it unto thee as thou hast said!”

“ ‘And he was a stone-cutter. And he hewed stones from the rock, with hard labour, and he laboured very heavily for slender wages, and he was contented.’ ”

“Most charming,” exclaimed Duclari, “but now you still owe us the proof that little *Oopi* ought to have been imponderable.”

“No, I never promised you that proof! I have only wished to tell you how I made her acquaintance. When my story was finished, I asked:

“ ‘And you, *Oopi*, what would you choose, if an angel from heaven came to ask you what you most wished?’

“ ‘Surely, Sir, I should pray that he might take me to heaven.’ ”

“Isn’t that beautifully sweet?” asked Tine, turning to her guests, who perhaps thought it very absurd. . . .

Havelaar rose, and wiped something from his forehead.



CHAPTER XII

"DEAREST MAX," said Tine, "our dessert is very meagre. Couldn't you . . . you know . . . Madame Geoffrin?"

"Tell you a little more, instead of sweetmeats? The deuce, I am hoarse. It's Verbrugge's turn."

"Yes, Mr. Verbrugge! Do relieve Max for awhile," begged Mrs. Havelaar.

Verbrugge thought a moment, and began:

"There once was a man who stole a turkey . . ."

"O, you wretch," exclaimed Havelaar, "you've got that from *Padang*! And how does it go on?"

"That's all. Who knows the end of the story?"

"Well, *I*! I ate it together with . . . someone. Do you know why I was suspended at *Padang*?"

"They said there was a deficit in your cash at *Natal*," resumed Verbrugge.

"That was not altogether untrue, yet it was not *true* either. At *Natal*, owing to a number of causes, I had been very careless in my financial accounts, which were indeed open to many strictures. But that happened so often in those days! The conditions in the north of Sumatra were, shortly after the taking of *Baroos*, *Tapoos*, and *Singkel*, so confused, and everything was so unquiet, that no one could blame a young man, who preferred being on horseback to counting cash or keeping books, for the fact that things were not all so orderly and regular as one might have expected from an Amsterdam book-keeper who had nothing else to do. The *Battahlands* were greatly disturbed, and you know, Verbrugge, how everything that takes place in the *Battahs* always reacts on *Natal*. I slept every night fully dressed to be quite ready for eventualities,

and this often proved highly necessary. Then also danger — a short while before my arrival a plot had been discovered to assassinate my predecessor and raise a rebellion — danger has a distinct attraction, especially when one is only twenty-two. This attraction naturally makes a man unfit at times for office or for the meticulous precision that is necessary for the proper management of money matters. Besides, I had all sorts of follies in my head . . .”

“*Traoossa*,”¹ Mrs. Havelaar called out to the servant.

“*What* is not required?”

“I had told them to prepare something else in the kitchen. . . . An omelette or something of the kind.”

“I see! and that’s no longer required when I start telling about my follies? You naughty wretch, Tine. Well, I’m content, but the gentlemen have a vote also. Verbrugge, what’s your choice, your share of the omelette, or the story?”

“That’s a difficult position for a polite man,” said Verbrugge.

“And I also would rather not choose,” added Duclari, “for it’s a question here of deciding between husband and wife, and: *entre l’écorce et le bois il ne faut pas mettre le doigt*.”

“I’ll help you out, gentlemen, the omelette is . . .”

“Mrs. Havelaar,” said the very courteous Duclari, “the omelette will surely be worth as much as . . .”

“The story! Oh, certainly, if it were worth anything! But there is an obstacle. . . .”

“I bet there is no sugar in the house yet,” exclaimed Verbrugge. “Well, please send to my place for anything you want.”

“There is sugar . . . among Mrs. Slotering’s things. No, that’s not what’s wanting. If the omelette were otherwise all right, that would be no obstacle, but . . .”

“What, then, has it fallen into the fire?”

“I wish it were true. No, it can’t fall into the fire. It is . . .”

“For goodness’ sake then, Tine,” exclaimed Havelaar, “what is it?”

¹ “It is not required.”

"It's imponderable, Max, like your women of Arles . . . ought to be! I have no omelette . . . I have nothing more!"

"Then for heaven's sake the story," sighed Duclari in comical despair.

"But we have coffee," said Tine.

"Good! we'll take coffee in the front veranda, and let's call Mrs. Slotering and the girls to join us," said Havelaar, and the little company went outside.

"I expect she'll ask to be excused, Max! you know too that she would rather not have her meals with us, and I cannot blame her."

"She has probably heard that I tell stories," said Havelaar, "and that has frightened her off."

"Oh, no, Max, that wouldn't hurt her; she doesn't understand Dutch. No, she has told me that she wants to go on with her own household, and I quite understand that. Do you remember how you once translated my initials?"

"E.H.V.W. *Eigen haard veel waard.*"¹

"So then! She is quite right. Besides, it appears to me that she is a bit shy of strangers. Just imagine, she has all strange people that come into her grounds driven off by the caretakers."

"I ask for the story or the omelette," said Duclari.

"And so do I!" exclaimed Verbrugge. "Excuses not accepted. We have a right to a complete meal, and so I demand this story of the turkey."

"I have already given it you," said Havelaar. "I had stolen the animal from General Vandamme, and I ate it . . . with someone."

"Before this 'someone' was taken up to heaven," said Tine archly.

"No, that is cheating," called Duclari. "We must know why you . . . stole that turkey."

"Why! because I was in want, and that was the fault of General Vandamme, who had suspended me."

¹ Own hearth great worth (One's own hearth is worth a good deal).

"If I don't get to know more about this I'll bring my own omelette next time," complained Verbrugge.

"Believe me, there is nothing else behind it than that. He had a great many turkeys and I had nothing. They drove those fowls past my door . . . I took one and said to the man who imagined he was looking after them: 'Tell the General that I, Max Havelaar, take this turkey because I want to eat.'"

"And then that epigram?"

"Has Verbrugge spoken to you about that?"

"Yes."

"That had nothing to do with the turkey. I made the thing because he suspended so many officials. There were at *Padang* quite seven or eight whom with more or less justification he had suspended from their offices, and several of them deserved it much less than I. The Assistant-Resident of *Padang* even had been suspended, and that for a reason which, I believe, was quite different from that stated in the Order. I don't mind telling you this, although I cannot assure you that I know it all exactly, and though I only repeat what in the *Chinese Church*¹ at *Padang* they took to be the truth, and what indeed—especially in view of the known peculiarities of the General—may *well* have been true.

"He had, you must know, married his wife to win a wager, and with it an 'anchor'² of wine. So he often went out of an evening to . . . gad about everywhere. The supernumerary Valkenaar was said on one occasion in a small street near the girls' orphanage to have so strictly respected his incognito as to have given him a thrashing as he would to a 'common' street-arab. Not far from there lived the English Miss X. There was a rumour that this Miss X had given birth to a child which had . . . disappeared. The Assistant-Resident was obliged as head of the police, and it was also indeed his intention, to go into this matter, and he ap-

¹ In India an expression like "*Tout Paris*."

² One sixth of a hog'shead.

pears to have said something about this intention during a whist-evening at the General's quarters. But what do you think happened! Next day he received orders to go to a certain division of which the Controller-in-charge had been suspended for real or supposed dishonesty, in order that on the spot he might investigate certain matters and might 'report' on them. It is true, the Assistant-Resident was astonished that a charge was given to him which did not in the least concern his division, but since strictly speaking he could consider this charge as a distinction which conferred an honour upon him, and as he was on such a friendly footing with the General that he had no cause to suspect a trap, he acquiesced in his mission, and set out for . . . I want to forget where . . . in order to carry out his orders. After a while he returned, and sent in a report which was not unfavourable to the Controller. But lo and behold! in the meanwhile at *Padang* the public — i.e. no one and yet everyone — had discovered that the Controller had only been suspended to create an opportunity for temporarily removing the Assistant-Resident from the place, in order to prevent his intended inquiry into the disappearance of that child, or at least to defer it till such time as would render it more difficult to clear the matter up. I repeat that I personally cannot vouch for the truth of this, but, from the knowledge I myself obtained afterwards of General Vandamme, this reading of the case seems to me quite credible. At *Padang* there was no one who, as regards the depth to which his morality had sunk, did not consider him capable of such action. Most people only attributed one good quality to him, that of intrepidity in danger, and if I, who saw him in times of danger, had held the opinion that after all he was a brave man, this alone would now move me not to tell you this story. Certainly, in Sumatra he had been responsible for a deal of sabre-slashing, but anyone who had seen some of these occurrences at close quarters would have felt strongly inclined to discount his bravery; and, strange though it may seem, I believe he owed his soldier-reputation largely to the love of contrast which exists more

or less in all of us. One loves to be able to say: 'It is true that Peter or Paul is *this*, or *this*, or *this*, but . . . he is also *that other*: *that* cannot be denied him!' And one is never so certain of being praised as when one is possessed of a very conspicuous failing. You, Verbrugge, are drunk every day . . ."

"I?" asked Verbrugge, who was a paragon of temperance.

"Yes, *I* am now making you drunk, daily! You forget yourself so far that Duclari of an evening stumbles over you in the veranda. He will think this disagreeable, but at once he will remember having noticed some good quality in you which, after all, was not conspicuous formerly. And when I come on the scene, and find you so objectionably . . . *horizontal*, he will lay his hand on my arm, and exclaim: 'Ah! do believe that in every other respect he is such a dear, fine, smart fellow!'"

"*That* I'll say of Verbrugge in any case," exclaimed Duclari, "even when he is *vertical*."

"But not with such fire and conviction! Just remember how often one hears: 'Oh, if *that* man would look after his business, wouldn't he be *someone*! But . . .' and then follows the demonstration that he does *not* look after his business, and is therefore *nobody*. I believe I know the reason of this. Of the dead, too, one always learns good qualities that formerly we never noticed. The cause is no doubt that *they are not in anyone's way*. All men are more or less competitors. We would love to place everyone else *quite*, and in *everything*, below us. To express this, however, is forbidden by good manners and even by self-interest, for soon no one would believe us even though we maintained true things. We have, therefore, to find a roundabout way, and this is how we do it. When you, Duclari, say: 'Lieut. Spatterdash is a good soldier, I swear he is a good soldier, I cannot tell you emphatically enough what a good soldier Lieutenant Spatterdash is . . . but he is no good at *theory* . . .' Didn't you say so, Duclari?"

"I have never known or seen a Lieutenant Spatterdash!"

"Very well, then create one, and say this of him!"

"All right, I create him, and say it."

"Then do you know what you have really said? You have said that you, Duclari, are *à cheval* in *theory*. I am not a hair's breadth better. Believe me, we do an injustice in being so angry with a person who is very bad, for even the good ones among us are so near to badness! Let perfection be posited as zero, and one hundred degrees be called bad, then how wrong we are — we who fluctuate between ninety-eight and ninety-nine! — to set up a hue and cry about a man who finds himself at one hundred and one! And even then I believe that many only do not reach the hundredth degree for want of good qualities — want of courage, for instance, to be entirely what they are."

"At what degree am I, Max?"

"I want a magnifying glass for the subdivisions, Tine."

"I protest," exclaimed Verbrugge — "no, Mrs. Havelaar, not against your proximity to zero! — no, but officials have been suspended, a child has disappeared, a general stands accused . . . I demand *la pièce!*"

"Tine, for goodness' sake see that next time there is something in the house! No, Verbrugge, you are not going to get *la pièce* before I have done a little more riding round on my hobby with regard to contrasts. I said every man sees in his fellow a kind of rival. One is not permitted to be always blaming — which would catch the eye too much! — so we seek to exalt one good quality in particular, in order to draw special attention to the bad quality the revealment of which is in reality all we are after, without risking the appearance of partiality. When someone complains to me then I answer: 'How can you be so angry about this? Haven't I also said that your daughter is a sweet girl?' You see, this gives a double win! We are both grocers, I take away his customers, who will buy no raisins from a thief, and at the same time people will say that I am a kind man, because I praise the daughter of a rival."

"No, surely it's not as bad as that," said Duclari, "that's a little too strong!"

"That only appears so to you because I have made the comparison a little brief and brusque. We must of course mentally wrap up a little that 'He is a thief.' The gist, however, of the parable remains true. When we are compelled to admit in a person certain qualities that give him a claim to esteem, respect, or awe, then it gives us a pleasure to discover by the side of those qualities something that relieves us partly or wholly from the tribute thus owed. 'To *such* a poet one would bow the head, but . . . he beats his wife!' You see, we gladly use the black marks of the woman as a pretext to be allowed to keep our head erect, and in the end we are even quite pleased that he beats the poor thing, although otherwise this would naturally be a horrible act. As soon as we have to recognize that someone possesses qualities that render him worthy of the honour of a pedestal, as soon as we can no longer deny his claim to this without passing for ignorant, unfeeling, or jealous . . . then at last we say: 'Right, put him on it!' But already during the process of putting him there, and while he himself is under the delusion that we are enchanted with his eminence, we are making the noose in the *lasso* that shall serve at the first favourable opportunity to drag him down. The more frequent the mutation among the proprietors of pedestals, the greater becomes the chance for others to get a turn also; and this is so true that, from habit as well as for practice — just as a hunter who fires at crows which after all he does not intend to pick up — we also like to drag down *those* statues whose pedestal we shall never have the chance of occupying. *Kappelman*, who feeds himself with sauerkraut and small beer, seeks elevation in the lament: 'Alexander was *not* great . . . he was intemperate,' although for *Kappelman* there is not the slightest chance of ever competing with Alexander in world-conquest.

"However this may be, I am certain that many would never have conceived the idea of thinking General Vandamme so brave, if his

bravery might not have served them for the conveyance of the invariable adjunct: 'But . . . his morality!' And also that this immorality would not have been taken so seriously by the many who themselves were not wholly unassailable on that score, had they not needed it as a counterpoise to his renown for bravery, which with some would hardly allow them to sleep.

"One quality he really possessed in a high degree: energy. Whatever he made up his mind to do, was *to be* done, and usually also — *was* done. But — you see that again I at once have the contrast at hand! — but then in the choice of the means he certainly was a little . . . free, and, as *Van der Palm*, I believe unjustly, said of Napoleon: 'Obstacles of morality never stood in his way!' Well, in that way, of course, it is certainly easier to attain one's object than if one *did* consider oneself bound by such a thing.

"So the Assistant-Resident of *Padang* had sent in a report that was favourable to the suspended Controller, whose suspension thus assumed an appearance of injustice. The *Padang* rumours continued: the lost child was still continually talked about. The Assistant-Resident again felt himself called upon to take up this matter; but before he could obtain any clarity in the affair, he received an Order by which the Governor of the West Coast of Sumatra suspended him 'for dishonesty in official dealings.' It was suggested that, from motives of friendship or sympathy, he had, against his better knowledge, placed the affair of the Controller in a false light.

"I have not read the documents that deal with this matter, but I absolutely know that the Assistant-Resident had no relations whatever with this Controller, which would also naturally be evident from the fact that it was he who had been specially chosen to inquire into the affair. I also know that he was a man of undoubted probity, and that the Government knew him to be such, as is borne out by the cancellation of the suspension, after the case had been investigated elsewhere than on the West Coast of Sumatra. The Controller, also, was afterwards reinstated without a blemish on his record. It was their suspension that suggested the epigram to

me which I caused to be placed on the General's breakfast-table, by a person then in his, and previously in my service: —

“ ‘Gadder *Suspension-Writ*, who rules suspending us,
Governor, weirwolf of our days, John All-suspender,
Would gladly e'en suspend his feeble conscience thus,
But that long since 'twas forced its office to surrender.’ ”

“ You must pardon me, Mr. Havelaar, I think your action was not permissible,” said Duclari.

“ And so do I . . . but I had to take *some* action! You must realize that I had no money, that I received nothing, and that any day I might fear death from starvation, which indeed came close enough to me. I had few or no relations at *Padang*, and, besides, I had written to the General that *he* was responsible if I should die from want, also that I should accept help from no one. There were people in the Interior who, hearing of my circumstances, invited me to come and stay with them, but the General wouldn't allow a pass to be given me. Nor was I allowed to leave for Java. Everywhere else I could have managed for myself, and perhaps even there if people had not all been so afraid of the powerful General. It seemed to be his intention to let me starve. This lasted nine months.”

“ And how did you keep alive so long? Or had the General many turkeys? ”

“ Yes, plenty! But that was of no use to me . . . one does a thing like that once, you see! What I did during all that time? Ah, well . . . I composed verses, wrote plays . . . and so on.”

“ And were you able to buy rice for those things at *Padang*? ”

“ No, but *that* I never asked for them. I would rather not say how I lived.”

Tine pressed his hand. *She* knew.

“ I have read a couple of lines which you are said to have written on the back of a bill in those days,” said Verbrugge.

“ I know what you refer to. Those lines depicted my position. There was a periodical at that time called *The Copyist*, to which I

had subscribed. It was under Government patronage — the editor was an officer of the General Secretarial Department — and so the subscriptions were paid into the Treasury. They presented to me a bill for twenty guilders. As this money had to pass through the Governor's office, and therefore the receipt, if the debt remained unpaid, would similarly pass through that office to be returned to Java, I took the opportunity of protesting on the back of this document against my poverty: —

*“Vingt florins . . . quel trésor! Adieu! littérature,
Adieu, Copiste, adieu! Trop malheureux destin:
Je meurs de faim, de froid, d'ennui et de chagrin,
Vingt florins font pour moi deux mois de nourriture!
Si j'avais vingt florins je serais mieux chaussé,
Mieux nourri, mieux logé, j'en ferais bonne chère . . .
Il faut vivre avant tout; soit vie de misère:
Le crime fait la honte, et non la pauvreté!”¹*

“But when afterwards in Batavia I visited the Editor of *The Copyist* to pay my twenty guilders, I found that I owed nothing. It appeared that the General himself had paid this money for me in order not to be compelled to return the illustrated bill to Batavia.”

“But what did he do after . . . after . . . your taking that turkey? It was after all . . . theft! And after that epigram?”

“He inflicted a terrible punishment! If for these facts he had brought me to justice as guilty of disrespect to the Governor of the West Coast of Sumatra, which in those days with a small stretch might have been interpreted as ‘*an effort to undermine Dutch authority and an incitement to rebellion*’ or ‘*larceny on the King's highway*,’ he would have shown himself a kind-hearted man. But no, he punished me more effectively . . . miserably! the man who had charge of the turkeys was ordered next time to choose another way. And my epigram . . . alas, that was still worse! He said

¹ I have left this untranslated from the French in which it was written, to give an idea of Multatuli's skill in writing verse in a foreign language at the age of 23. *Trsl.*

nothing, and did *nothing*! Look, that was cruel! He grudged me the last vestige of the martyr's glory, I was not to be made important through prosecution, nor unhappy through excessive wit! O, Duclari . . . Ô, Verbrugge . . . it was calculated once and for all to make one loathe epigrams and turkeys! So little encouragement quenches the flame of genius unto the last spark . . . inclusive; I never did it again!"



CHAPTER XIII

"AND now may we hear why you really were suspended?" asked Duclari.

"Oh, yes, with pleasure! For as I can give all that I have to say about it as truth, and can partly prove it even now, you will see from it that I did not act with levity when in my story about that lost child I did not reject the tittle-tattle of *Padang* as absolutely absurd. You will find it perfectly credible, when you make acquaintance with our valiant General in the affairs that concern *me*.

"There were, as I said, in my cash-accounts at *Natal* inaccuracies and omissions. You know perfectly well how every inaccuracy is to one's own disadvantage: one never has any money in excess through negligence. The Chief of the Accountant's Branch at *Padang*, who was not exactly a particular friend of mine, maintained that there were thousands ¹ short. But please note that my attention was not drawn to this while I was at *Natal*. Most unexpectedly I received a transfer to the *Padang* Uplands. You know, Verbrugge, that in Sumatra a position in the Uplands of *Padang* is considered more advantageous and pleasant than in the Northern Residency. As I had, only a few months earlier, had a visit from the Governor (you will hear presently the why and how), and as during his stay in *Natal*, and even in my house, things had happened in which I had acted in what seemed to me a proper and manly manner, I took this transfer as a favourable distinction, and left *Natal* for *Padang* with a light heart. I travelled in a French boat, the *Baobab*, from Marseilles, which had loaded pepper in *Atchin*, and which . . . of course, at *Natal* 'was short of drinking-water.' As soon as I arrived at *Padang*, with the intention of at

¹ Thousands of guilders. A guilder is 1/8. *Trsl.*

once leaving thence for the Interior, I wished, in accordance with custom and duty, to call on the Governor; but he sent me word that he could not see me, and at the same time that I was to defer my departure for my new station till further orders. You will understand that I was greatly astonished at this, the more so as at *Natal* he had on leaving me given me the impression that he had rather a good opinion of me. I had not many acquaintances at *Padang*, but from the few I had I learnt — or rather I inferred it from their attitude — that the General was greatly vexed with me. I say I *inferred* it, for, at an outpost such as *Padang* was at that time, the good-will of many might be taken as a barometer of the favour one had found in the eyes of the Governor. I felt that a storm was brewing, without knowing from what quarter the wind was to come. As I was in need of money, I asked this one and the other successively to assist me, and I was really amazed to meet with a refusal everywhere. At *Padang* no less than elsewhere in India, where in general credit plays even *too* great a part, the attitude on that score was usually rather liberal. In every other case they would gladly have advanced a few hundred guilders to a travelling Controller who was delayed somewhere unexpectedly. But to me all help was refused. I pressed some of those I spoke to that they should name the causes of this suspicious demeanour, and *de fil en aiguille* I finally came to know that in my financial management at *Natal* errors and omissions had been discovered which laid me under suspicion of unfaithful administration. That there were errors in my administration did not astonish me in the least. Had it been otherwise it would have given me cause for astonishment; but I certainly thought it extraordinary that the Governor, who had been a personal witness to the fact that I had constantly had to fight far from my office with the discontent of the population and their incessant attempts at rebellion . . . that he who himself had praised me for what he had called ‘resoluteness,’ now labelled the discovered error with the name of disloyalty or dishonesty. For surely no one could know better than he

that in such cases there never could be question of anything else than *force majeure*.

“And even if anyone were to deny this *force majeure*, if anyone wished to hold me responsible for errors that occurred in moments when — often in danger of life! — far from the cashbox or what did duty as such, I had to entrust its care to others, as though one demanded that, doing one thing, I still had no business to leave the other undone, even then I could only have been guilty of a carelessness which had nothing in common with ‘disloyalty.’ There were, moreover, especially in those days, numerous instances where the Government had fully recognized this difficulty of the position of the officials in Sumatra, and it seemed to be quite an accepted principle that on such occasions one overlooked a reasonable amount of things. One confined oneself to deducting the equivalent of the shortage from the officer’s salary, and the proof would have had to be very clear before anyone would have mentioned the word ‘disloyalty’ or even thought of it. And this had been so entirely the rule that at *Natal* I had myself said to the Governor that I feared, when my accounts were examined in the office at *Padang*, I should have to refund a good deal, to which he replied with a shrug of the shoulders: ‘Ah, well . . . those money matters!’ as though he himself felt that the lesser concern had to stand back for the greater.

“Now I recognize that money matters are important. But however important, in this case they were subordinate to other branches of activity that pre-eminently required attention. If owing to carelessness or neglect a few thousand guilders had been short in my administration, I should not have called this *in itself* a trifle. But as these thousands were short in consequence of my successful efforts to prevent the rebellion which threatened to set the division of *Mandhéling* aflame, and to allow the *Atchinese* to return to the places whence just recently we had expelled them at the sacrifice of much money and many lives, the importance of the shortage sank into insignificance, and it was even more or less un-

just to require its repayment from one who had saved infinitely greater interests.

"And yet I was content with such repayment. For by not exacting it the door would have been opened wide to dishonesty.

"After waiting for days — you will understand in what state of mind! — I received from the Governor's secretariate a letter in which he notified me that I was suspected of disloyalty, and should have to answer a number of charges with regard to my administration. Some of them I could at once clear up. For others, however, I required to examine certain documents, and it was of special importance that I should look into these matters at *Natal* itself, in order to inquire among my clerks into the causes of the discrepancies found, as probably there I should have succeeded in my efforts to clear up everything. For instance, the neglect to write off moneys sent to *Mandhéling* — you know, Verbrugge, that troops in the interior are paid from the *Natal* treasury supplies — or other similar things, which most probably would at once have been discovered by me if I could have looked into them on the spot, might very likely have caused these regrettable errors. But the General would not let me go to *Natal*. This refusal made me all the more impressed with the strange manner in which this charge of disloyalty had been laid against me. Why had I been so suddenly transferred from *Natal*, and that under suspicion of disloyalty? Why had this degrading suspicion only been made known to me when I was far from the place where I should have been in a position to defend myself? And above all, why had these matters in my case immediately been placed in the most unfavourable light, contrary to justice and accepted custom?

"Before I was even able to reply to all the strictures as best I could without archives or oral inquiry, I learnt from an indirect source that the General was so angry with me '*because at Natal I had crossed him, in which indeed, people added, I had been very wrong.*'

"Then a light dawned on me. Yes, I had crossed him, but all

the time naïvely supposing that he would esteem me for it! I *had* crossed him, but on his departure nothing had made me suspect that he was angry about it! Stupidly enough I had looked upon the favourable transfer to *Padang* as a proof that he had admired me for 'crossing' him. You will see how little I knew him.

"But as soon as I learnt that this was the cause of the severity with which my financial administration had been condemned, I was at peace with myself. I answered point by point to the best of my ability, and concluded my letter — I still have the notes of it — with the words:

"'I have answered the strictures passed on my administration as far as it is possible without archives or local inquiry. I beg that Your Excellency will refrain from treating me with any indulgence. I am young, and insignificant in comparison with the power of the ruling conceptions against which my principles compel me to stand up; but I am nevertheless proud of my moral independence, proud of my honour.'

"Next day I was suspended on account of 'unfaithful administration.' The Officer of Justice was ordered to carry out his 'office and duty' with regard to me.

"So there I stood at *Padang*, scarce twenty-three, and looked into the future which was to bring me dishonour! I was advised to appeal on the score of my youth — I was still a minor¹ when the alleged offences had taken place — but I declined. Had I not already thought and suffered too much, and . . . I venture to add: also already worked too much, for me to wish to take shelter behind my youth? You see from the conclusion of my letter just quoted, that I did not wish to be treated as a child, I who at *Natal* had done my duty in respect to the General like a man. And also, from that letter you may see how unfounded was the charge laid against me. Surely, one who is guilty of petty offences does not write like that!

"I was not imprisoned, yet this should have been done if they

¹ In Holland minority ended only with the 23rd year of life.

had been in earnest with their criminal suspicion. Perhaps, however, there was a reason for this apparent omission. For isn't one compelled to keep and feed a prisoner? As I was not allowed to leave *Padang*, I was in reality a prisoner all the same, but a prisoner without a roof and without bread. I had repeatedly, but every time without result, written to the General to say that he was not at liberty to prevent my departure from *Padang*, for that, even if I were guilty of the worst crime, no offence may be punished with *starvation*.

"After the Council of Justice, being evidently at a loss how to act in the matter, had found a way out by declaring itself incompetent, because prosecution for offences in office may only take place on the authorization of the Government in *Batavia*, the General detained me, as I said, nine months at *Padang*. At last he received orders from headquarters to allow me to go to *Batavia*.

"When, a couple of years after, I had a little money — my dear Tine, *you* had given it me! — I paid a few thousand guilders in order to settle the *Natal* cash-accounts of 1842 and 1843, and someone who might be considered to represent the Government of Netherlands India said to me: 'I shouldn't have done this in your place . . . I should have given them a bill on eternity.' *Ainsi va le monde!*"

Just as Havelaar wanted to start the story his guests expected from him, and which was to make it clear why and in what manner he had so 'crossed' General Vandamme at *Natal*, Mrs. Slotering showed herself in the front veranda of her house, and beckoned the police-orderly who was sitting on a bench at one side of Havelaar's residence. He went over to her, and then called out something to a man who had just entered her grounds, probably in order to go to the kitchen at the back of the house. Our company would probably not have paid attention to this, if Tine had not said at table during the afternoon that Mrs. Slotering was so timid and seemed to exercise a kind of supervision over everyone who entered the grounds. One could see the man whom the orderly had

called go towards her, and it almost seemed as if she were questioning him, and as if the result were not to his advantage. He, at any rate, retraced his steps and went outside.

"I am sorry," said Tine. "It may have been a man who had fowls for sale, or vegetables. I haven't anything in the house yet."

"Well, then you can send out someone," replied Havelaar. "You know that native ladies are fond of exercising authority. Her husband was formerly the principal person here, and however little an Assistant-Resident may in reality count, in his Division he is a little king: she isn't accustomed yet to her dethronement. Don't let us rob the poor woman of this little pleasure. Pretend not to notice it."

This, certainly, Tine did not find difficult: *she* was not fond of authority.

Here it is necessary to make a digression, and I even want to digress this time about digressions. It is not always easy for a writer to sail carefully through the passage between the two rocks of too much or too little, and this difficulty increases when one describes conditions that take the reader to unknown regions. There is too close a relation between places and events to allow of the entire omission of place-description, and the difficulty of avoiding both rocks referred to is twice as great for anyone who has selected India as the scene of his story. For whereas a writer who deals with European conditions can take many things as known, he that places his drama in India must constantly ask himself whether the non-Indian reader will correctly understand this or that circumstance. If the European reader should imagine Mrs. Slotering as "staying" with the Havelaars, as might be the case in Europe, he would think it incomprehensible that she was not present in the company which was taking coffee in the front veranda. It is true, I have already said that she lived in a separate house, but for the right conception of this, and also of subsequent events, it is really necessary that I make known, more or less, the nature of Havelaar's house and grounds.

The charge so frequently laid against the great master who wrote *Waverley*, that he often abused the patience of his readers in devoting too many pages to place-description, seems to me unfounded, and I hold that in judging of the correctness of such stricture, one must simply ask oneself the question: Was this description necessary to the right understanding of the impression the author wished to communicate to you? If so, then *he* should not be blamed for expecting *you* to take the trouble of *reading* what he has taken the trouble to *write*. If not, then one may throw the book away. For the author who is empty-headed enough to give, *without necessity*, topography for ideas, is rarely worth the trouble of reading, even where at last his description of places ends. But one must not forget that often the opinion of the reader as regards the necessity or otherwise of a digression is false, because before the catastrophe he cannot know what is or is not requisite for a gradual unfolding of the circumstances. And if after the catastrophe he takes up the book again — I am not speaking of books that one only reads once — and even then still holds that this or that digression could have been spared without detriment to the impression of the whole, it still always remains the question whether he would have received entirely that same impression if the author had not led him to it in a more or less artistic manner, exactly by those digressions which to the superficially judging reader appear superfluous.

Do you think that Amy Robsart's death would have moved you so much if you had been a stranger in Kenilworth halls? and can you believe that there is no connection — the connection of contrast — between the rich attire in which the unworthy Leicester showed himself to her, and the blackness of his soul? Do you not feel that Leicester — everyone knows this who knows the man from other sources than the novel alone — stood infinitely lower than he is depicted in *Kenilworth*? But the great novelist, who would rather fascinate by artistic arrangement of shading than by coarseness of colours, judged it beneath him to steep his brush in all the mud and blood that clung to the unworthy favourite of Elizabeth. He

wished to point to but one speck in the pool of filth, but understood the art of making such specks conspicuous by means of the tints he placed by their side in his immortal writings. Anyone now who thinks he can cast away as superfluous what has thus been placed alongside it, loses sight completely of the fact that then, in order to produce effects, one will have to go back to the School which from 1830 flourished so long in France, although to the credit of that country I must say that the authors who sinned most against good taste in this respect were more in vogue in other countries than in France herself. That School — I trust and believe it is now extinct — appreciated how easy it was to grope in pools of blood, and cast handfuls of it on the canvas, so that one might see the large blotches at a distance! And it is true, the coarse streaks of red and black are painted with less exertion than is required to pencil in the delicate touches in the cup of a lily. For that very reason this school mostly selected kings as heroes for its stories, and for preference those belonging to the time when the nations had not yet come of age. See, the sorrow of the king is translated on paper into the howl of the people . . . *his* wrath offers the author an opportunity to kill thousands in the field of battle . . . *his* mistakes give room for the painting of famine and pestilence . . . all this gives scope for the coarse brush! If you are not moved by the mute horror of a corpse I have just stretched out there, then there is room in my story for a victim that still gasps and shrieks! Have you not shed tears for that mother who vainly seeks her child? . . . well, I will show you another mother who sees her child quartered! Are your feelings not harrowed by the martyrdom of that man? . . . I will multiply the sensation a hundredfold by having ninety-nine other men tortured by the side of him! Are you so hardened as not to shudder at the sight of the soldier who, in the beleaguered fortress, from hunger devours his left arm? . . .

Epicure! I propose that you shall command: "Form a circle to the right and left! And let every man eat the left arm of the man on his right . . . quick march!"

Yes, well, in this way artistic horror passes on to silliness . . . which is what *en passant* I wished to prove.

And to this indeed one would come by condemning prematurely an author who wished to prepare you gradually for his catastrophe, without having recourse to these shrieking colours.

Yet the danger on the opposite side is even greater. You despise the efforts of a coarse literature which holds that it must storm your feelings with gross weapons, but . . . if the author goes to the other extreme, if he offends by *too much* digression from his main theme, by *too much* brush-mannerism, then your anger is greater still, and rightly so! For then he bores you, and this is unpardonable.

When you and I are walking together, and you keep straying from the road and calling me into the thicket, with the sole object of lengthening our walk, I naturally think this disagreeable, and make up my mind that next time I will go by myself. But if you are able to show me a plant in the thicket which I did not know before, or about which you point out to me something that had hitherto escaped my notice . . . if from time to time you take me to a flower which I am tempted to pick and wear in my buttonhole, then I forgive you these digressions from the road; indeed, they fill me with gratitude.

And even without flower or plant, as soon as you call me aside to show me through an opening in the trees the path that presently we shall be treading, but that still lies in front of us in the depth of distance, and winds down below like a scarce perceptible line through the field yonder . . . then also I do not take your digression amiss. For when at last we shall have gone so far, I shall then know how our road has meandered through the mountains, what it is that has caused the sun, just now yonder, to have since come round to the left of us, why that hill is now behind us whose top we previously saw in front of us . . . see, then your digression has made it possible for me to *understand* the nature of my walk, and understanding is joy.

I, reader, have in my story often left you on the main road, although I was sorely tempted to carry you off into the thicket. I feared that the walk might bore you, as I did not know whether you would derive any pleasure from the flowers or plants I wished to show you. But as this time I believe that afterwards it will give you satisfaction to have seen the path that presently we shall tread, I now feel urged to tell you something about Havelaar's house.

One would be mistaken if one formed a conception of a house in Java according to European ideas, and imagined a mass of stone with rooms large and small heaped on top of one another, with the street in front, neighbours to the right and left whose *lares* and *penates* lean up against our own, and a puny garden behind with three little currant trees. With but few exceptions, the houses in India have no storeys. This may appear strange to the European reader, for it is characteristic of civilization — or what passes as such — to think everything strange that is natural. The Indian houses are entirely different from ours, but it is not *they* that are strange, it is *ours*. He that first was able to permit himself the luxury of not sleeping in one room with his cows did not place the second room of his house *on top*, but *by the side* of the first, for building on one floor is more simple and also offers more comfort to the occupant. Our high houses were born from the want of space: we sought in the air what could not be found on the earth, and so in reality every servant-girl who of an evening shuts the window of the attic she sleeps in is a living protest against over-population . . . though she herself thinks of something else, I am quite willing to believe.

In countries, therefore, where civilization and over-population have not yet, by compression below, pinched humanity upward, the houses are without storeys, and Havelaar's did not belong to the rare exceptions to this rule. On entering . . . but no, I will give proof that I relinquish every claim to picturesqueness. *Given*: an oblong rectangular area which you are asked to divide into twenty-one spaces, three extending from side to side, seven from front to

back. We will number these spaces, beginning at the left-top corner, towards the right, so that number 4 comes under number 1, 5 under 2, and so on.

The first three numbers together form the front veranda, which is open on three sides, and the front part of the roof of which rests on columns. Thence through the double doors one enters the inner colonnade, represented by the next three spaces. Numbers 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 18 are rooms, most of which are connected with the adjoining ones by doors. The highest three numbers form the open rear-gallery, and the part I omitted is a kind of enclosed inner gallery, or passage. I am quite proud of this description.

It is difficult to say what expression would in Holland convey the idea attached in India to the word "grounds." Here there is neither garden, nor park, nor field, nor wood, but either something of each, or all together, or nothing of any. It is the land which belongs to the house, in so far as it is not covered by the house, so that in India the expression "house *and* grounds" would be considered redundant. There are here few or no houses without such grounds. Some contain woods and gardens and meadowland, and suggest a park. Others are flower-gardens. Elsewhere again the whole grounds are one large grass-paddock. And finally there are some which, quite simply, are made entirely into one macadamized square, perhaps less attractive to the eye, but a great auxiliary to cleanliness in the houses, as many kinds of insects are attracted by grass and trees.

Now Havelaar's grounds were large, and — it may sound strange — on one side one might have called them unlimited, as they bordered on a ravine which extended to the banks of the *Tjiodyoong*, the river which encloses *Rangkas-Betoong* in one of its many windings. It was difficult to define where the grounds of the assistant-residency terminated, and where communal lands started, as the great fall of water in the *Tjiodyoong*, which now retired its banks as far as the eye could see, and then again filled the ravine very close to Havelaar's house, continually altered the boundaries.

This ravine had always been a thorn in the flesh of Mrs. Slot-


ing, as was very natural. The vegetation, already everywhere in India so rapid in its growth, was, owing to the incessant accretion of river-ooze, most luxuriant; so much so that, even if the advancing and retiring waters had moved with a violence that uprooted and carried off the brushwood, yet there would have been but very little time required to cover the ground again with all the scrubby plant-life which rendered the cleaning up of the grounds, even in the immediate vicinity of the house, so difficult. And this caused no end of annoyance, even to others than the mother of the family. For without speaking of all sorts of insects, which usually of an evening flew round the lamp in such numbers as to make reading and writing an impossibility (a trouble known in many places in India), there were also in this brushwood a number of snakes and other animals, which did not confine themselves to the ravine, but were over and over again also found in the garden and behind the house, or on the grass-plot in the front square.

This square confronted one when standing in the outer veranda with one's back to the house. To the left of it was the building with the offices, the Treasury and the meeting-room where in the morning Havelaar had addressed the Chiefs, and behind it extended the ravine, which one overlooked as far as the *Tjiodyong*. Exactly opposite the offices stood the old assistant-residency, now temporarily occupied by Mrs. Slotering; and as the access from the main road to the grounds lay along two roads that passed by the two sides of the grass-plot, it follows that anyone entering the grounds to go to the kitchen or stables behind the chief building had to pass either the offices or Mrs. Slotering's house. Alongside and behind the chief building lay the large garden which had appealed to Tine on account of the many flowers she found there, and especially because little Max would often play there.

Havelaar had sent his excuses to Mrs. Slotering for not having called on her yet. He proposed to go the next day, but Tine had already been, and made acquaintance. We have already heard that the lady was a so-called "native child," who spoke no other lan-

guage than Malay. She had intimated her wish to continue her own household, to which Tine agreed with pleasure. And this agreement did not spring from want of hospitality, but chiefly from the fear that, having only just arrived at *Lebak*, and therefore not yet being "straight," she would not be able to make Mrs. Slotering as comfortable as the special circumstances of that lady made desirable. True, as she did not speak Dutch, she would not be "harmed" by the stories of Max, as Tine had called it; but the latter realized that more was necessary than not to *harm* the Slotering family, and the ill-furnished kitchen, in connection with the proposed economy, made her really consider Mrs. Slotering's desire very sensible. Whether, for the remainder, had the circumstances been different, the conversation with a person who spoke only *one* language, in which nothing has been printed that refines the mind, would have been conducive to mutual enjoyment, is doubtful. Tine would of course have associated with her as much as possible, and spoken to her a good deal about kitchen affairs, about *sambal-sambal*,¹ about pickling *ketimon* — without Liebig, ye gods! — but that kind of thing must in any case be a sacrifice, and it was therefore entirely satisfactory that owing to Mrs. Slotering's voluntary seclusion things had been settled in a manner which left both parties perfectly free. Still, it was peculiar that this lady had not only declined to take part in the common meals, but that she would not even make use of the offer to have her food prepared in the kitchen of Havelaar's house. This modesty, Tine said, was carried a little far, for there was room enough in the kitchen.

¹ Entremets.



CHAPTER XIV

“You know,” Havelaar began, “how the Dutch possessions on the west coast of Sumatra border on the independent realms in the northern part, of which *Atchin* is the most important. It is said that a secret article in the treaty of 1824 places on us the obligation towards the English not to cross the River *Singkel*. General Vandamme, who with a *faux air Napoléon* was anxious to extend his government as far as possible, met, therefore, in that direction an insuperable obstacle. I am forced to believe in the existence of that secret article, as it would otherwise seem strange to me that the Rajahs of *Troomon* and *Analaboo*, whose provinces are of some importance on account of the pepper trade there, have not long since been brought under Dutch sovereignty. You know how easy it is to find a pretext for making war on such little states, and so annexing them. To steal a country will always be easier than to steal a mill. I believe of General Vandamme that he would even have stolen a mill if he had felt tempted to it, and should not therefore understand him sparing those domains in the north, if no more solid reasons had existed for it than right and justice.

“However this may be, he did not turn his conqueror’s glances northward, but eastward. The dominions *Mandhéling* and *Ankola* — this was the name of the assistant-residency formed out of the just ‘pacified’ *Battahlands* — were, it is true, not yet purged of *Atchinese* influence — for when fanaticism once takes root, it is not easily extirpated — but at any rate the *Atchinese* themselves were no longer there. This, though, was not enough for the Governor. He extended his authority to the east coast, and Dutch officials and Dutch garrisons were sent to *Bila* and *Pertibie*, which posts, however, as you know, Verbrugge, were again evacuated afterwards.

"When a Government Commissary arrived in Sumatra who considered this extension objectless and therefore condemned it, especially as it militated against the desperate economy that had been so urgently insisted on from the motherland, General Vandamme maintained that the extension need become no burden on the Estimates, for the new garrisons were drawn from troops for which the expenditure had in any case already been passed, so that he had brought a very considerable territory under Dutch rule without expense resulting from the action. And furthermore, as regards the partial denudation of other places, especially *Mandhéling*, he thought he could sufficiently depend on the fidelity and attachment of *Yang di Pertooan*, the principal Chief in the *Battahlands*, to prevent any danger in this.

"The Government Commissary gave in reluctantly, and this only on the repeated protestations of the General that he *personally* went bail for *Yang di Pertooan's* fidelity.

"Now the Controller who administered the division of *Natal* before me was the son-in-law of the Assistant-Resident of the *Battahlands*, who was on unfriendly terms with *Yang di Pertooan*. Afterwards I heard a good deal of talk about complaints that had been made against this Assistant-Resident, but one had to be cautious in accepting these charges as true, as they largely originated with *Yang di Pertooan*, and that at a time when the latter had been accused of far more serious offences, which may have induced him to seek his defence in the faults of his accuser, a thing that of course often happens. However this may be, the officer in authority at *Natal* sided with his father-in-law against *Yang di Pertooan*, and this perhaps all the more ardently as the Controller was very friendly with a certain *Sootan Salim*, a *Natal* Chief who also was very bitter against the *Batak* head. For a long time already there had been a feud between the families of these two chiefs. Offers of marriage had been declined, there was jealousy about influence, pride on the side of *Yang di Pertooan*, who was of better birth, and several other causes concurred to keep *Natal* and *Mandhéling* set against each other.

"Suddenly the rumour spread that in *Mandhéling* a plot had been discovered, in which *Yang di Pertooan* was said to be mixed up, and which aimed at raising the sacred banner of rebellion and murdering all Europeans. The first discovery of it had been made in *Natal*, which was but natural, as one is always better informed about the trend of things in neighbouring provinces than in the place itself, because many who locally are withheld by fear of an implicated chief from revealing a circumstance known to them, will to some extent conquer that fear as soon as they are in a territory where that chief has no influence.

"And this too, Verbrugge, is the reason why I am not a stranger in the affairs of *Lebak*, and why I knew a fair proportion of the things that went on here before ever I thought of the possibility of my present appointment. About 1846 I was at *Krawang*, and I have wandered about a good deal in the *Preanger Regencies*, where already in 1840 I met refugees from *Lebak*. Also I know some landowners about *Buitenzorg* and in the districts around *Batavia*, and I am aware how these landed gentry have always been pleased about the unfavourable condition of this division, because it adds population to their own hereditary lands.

"In this way then the conspiracy was said to be discovered in which — if it ever existed, and this I do not know — *Yang di Pertooan* proved himself a traitor. According to the sworn testimony of witnesses called by the Controller of *Natal*, he was supposed, with his brother *Sootan Adam*, to have collected the *Batak* Chiefs around him in a sacred forest where they had sworn never to rest until the rule of the 'Christian dogs' in *Mandhéling* had been destroyed. It goes without saying that for this mission he had had an inspiration. You know that this feature is never absent from such occasions.

"Now whether this purpose ever really existed in *Yang di Pertooan's* mind is a thing I have no certainty about. I have read the declarations of the witnesses, but you will see presently why these may not be given unconditional credence. It is certain that, as regards the man's Islamite fanaticism, he may well have been capable

of it. He and the whole *Batak* population had only recently been converted by the *Padrees*¹ to the true faith, and new converts are usually fanatical.

“The consequence of this real or supposed discovery was that *Yang di Pertooan* was arrested by the Assistant-Resident of *Mandhéling*, and sent to *Natal*. Here the *Controller* provisionally locked him up in the fortress, and subsequently had him transported to *Padang* as a prisoner in the first available ship. It is obvious that all the documents were handed to the Governor which contained such incriminating evidence, and which were to be the justification for the severity of the measures taken. Our friend *Yang di Pertooan* then had left *Mandhéling* as a prisoner. At *Natal* he was a prisoner. He therefore expected — guilty or not guilty, which made no difference to the case, as he had been charged with high treason by competent authority — that at *Padang* also he would arrive as a prisoner. Surely then he must have been somewhat astonished to learn on disembarking that not only was he *free*, but that the General, whose carriage was waiting for him when he landed, would count it an honour to receive him and offer him hospitality in his house. No man accused of high treason has probably ever received a pleasanter surprise. Shortly after, the Assistant-Resident of *Mandhéling* was suspended from office on the charge of several offences on which I wish to pronounce no opinion. *Yang di Pertooan*, on the other hand, after having stayed with the General some time, and having been treated by him with the greatest distinction, returned by *Natal* to *Mandhéling*, not with the self-respect of one declared innocent, but with the pride of one so exalted in position that he required no declaration of innocence. For the matter had not even been *investigated*! Assuming that the charge preferred against him was held to be false, then this very suspicion should have made an examination requisite, in order to punish the false witnesses, and more particularly the persons who should be proved to have invited

¹ A section of the *Atchinese*.

such false testimony. It appears that the General had his own reasons for not allowing this examination to take place. The charge laid against *Yang di Pertooan* was treated *non avenu*, and I feel sure that the documents relating to it were never brought under the eyes of the Government at *Batavia*.

“Shortly after *Yang di Pertooan*’s return I arrived at *Natal* to take over the administration of that division. My predecessor told me of course what so recently had happened in *Mandhéling*, and gave me the necessary information about the political relation between that territory and my division. He was not to be blamed for complaining about the treatment, in his opinion unjust, which had been meted out to his father-in-law, and about the incomprehensible protection *Yang di Pertooan* appeared to enjoy on the part of the General. Neither he nor I knew at that moment that to send *Yang di Pertooan* to *Batavia* would have been a slap in the face to the General, and that the latter — having personally answered for the loyalty of that Chief — had good reason to protect him at any price from a charge of high treason. This was all the more important to the General, as meanwhile the just named Government Commissary himself had become Governor-General, and would therefore most likely have recalled him from his Governorship, naturally angry at the unwarranted confidence reposed in *Yang di Pertooan*, and at the obstinacy resulting from it, with which the General had opposed the evacuation of the east coast.

“‘But,’ said my predecessor, ‘whatever may have induced the General to accept offhand all the charges against my father-in-law, and not even to consider the much more serious accusations against *Yang di Pertooan* as deserving investigation, the matter is not finished! And if at *Padang*, as I expect, they have destroyed the recorded testimonies, I have here something else that *cannot* be destroyed.’

“And he showed me a verdict of the *Rappat*-Council¹ at *Natal*,

¹ A native council in Sumatra.

of which he was the President, sentencing a certain *Si Pamaga* to the penalty of the lash and branding-iron, and, I think, twenty years' hard labour, for attempted murder of the *Tooankoo*¹ of *Natal*.

" 'Just read the report of the Court-session,' said my predecessor, 'and then judge whether my father-in-law will not be believed in *Batavia*, when he there charges *Yang di Pertooan* with high treason!'

"I read the documents. According to the declarations of witnesses and '*the confession of the accused*,' *Si Pamaga* had been bribed to murder at *Natal* the *Tooankoo*, the latter's foster-father, *Sootan Salim*, and the Controller in charge. He had, in order to carry out this purpose, gone to the house of the *Tooankoo*, and had there, with the servants who were sitting on the steps of the veranda, started a conversation about a *sewah*,² with the object of prolonging his stay until he should notice the *Tooankoo*, who, indeed, soon showed himself, surrounded by some of his relatives and servants. *Pamaga* had run towards the *Tooankoo* with his *sewah*, but had, owing to unknown circumstances, not been able to carry out his project. The *Tooankoo*, frightened, had jumped out of the window, and *Pamaga* had taken flight. He had hidden himself in the woods, and been caught a few days after by the *Natal* police.

"The accused being asked *what had induced him to make this attempt and to plan the murder of Sootan Salim and the Controller of Natal*, answered that he '*was bribed to it by Sootan Adam, on behalf of the latter's brother, Yang di Pertooan of Mandhéling*.'

" 'Is this explicit or not?' asked my predecessor. 'The Resident signed the order of execution, and the sentence was carried out as regards the lash and the branding, and *Si Pamaga* is now on the way to *Padang*, to be sent thence to *Java* with a chain-gang. At the same time with him will arrive at *Batavia* the depositions of the Court, and there one will be able to judge what sort of man it is on

¹ Malay Chief.

² Dagger.

whose information my father-in-law was suspended! That sentence the General cannot destroy, however much he might wish to.'

"I took over the administration of the division of *Natal*, and my predecessor left. After a while I received word that the General was to arrive in the North of Sumatra in a man-of-war, and would also visit *Natal*. He alighted at my house with a large retinue, and immediately asked to see the original depositions with regard to 'the poor man who had been so shockingly ill-treated.' 'They themselves deserved the lash and the branding-iron!' he added.

"I couldn't make head or tail of the matter. For the causes of the quarrel about *Yang di Pertooan* were still unknown to me, and it could not, therefore, occur to me that either my predecessor would wittingly and purposely have sentenced an innocent man to so severe a penalty, or the General take a criminal under his protection against a just sentence. I received orders to arrest *Sootan Salim* and the *Tooankoo*. As the young *Tooankoo* was much loved by the population, and we had but a small garrison in the fortress, I asked the General's permission to leave him at large, to which he agreed. But for *Sootan Salim*, the particular enemy of *Yang di Pertooan*, there was no mercy. The tension among the population was great. The people of *Natal* suspected that the General stooped to be the tool of *Mandhéling* hatred, and it was in *those* circumstances that I was enabled from time to time to act in a manner which he called 'resolute,' and no wonder, as he did not offer *me* the small force that could be spared from the fortress, nor the detachment of marines which he had brought with him from the ship, when I might have been considered to require protection in riding out to the places where there were assemblages of discontented natives. On that occasion I became aware that General Vandamme took very good care of his own safety, and it is for that reason that I cannot subscribe to the renown of his bravery until I shall either have seen more instances or a different example of it.

"He formed in desperate haste a Council which I might call *ad hoc*. The members of it were: two of his adjutants, some other offi-

cers, the Officer of Justice, whom he had brought with him from *Padang*, and I. This Council was to inquire into the manner in which my predecessor had conducted the action against *Si Pamaga*. I had to call a number of witnesses whose declarations were necessary for the purpose. The General, who of course presided, carried on the whole examination, and the depositions were written down by the Officer of Justice. As, however, this official understood little Malay, and none of the Malay dialects spoken in the north of *Sumatra*, it was often necessary to interpret the answers of the witnesses to him, which was mostly done by the General himself. The sessions of this Council produced documents which *seem* to prove clearly: that *Si Pamaga* had never had the intention of murdering anyone whomsoever; that he had never seen or known *Sootan Adam* or *Yang di Pertooan*; that he had *not* rushed at the *Tooan-koo* of *Natal*; that the latter had *not* fled through the window . . . and so on! Further: that the sentence against the unfortunate *Si Pamaga* had been passed under pressure of the President (my predecessor) and the Councillor *Sootan Salim*, who had jointly invented the presumed crime of *Si Pamaga* in order to give the suspended Assistant of *Mandhéling* a weapon of defence, and also to vent their hatred of *Yang di Pertooan*.

“Now the manner in which on this occasion the General asked questions reminded one of the game of whist played by a certain Emperor of Morocco, who said to his partner: ‘Play hearts or I’ll cut your throat!’ And also the translations, as he dictated them to the Officer of Justice, left much to be desired.

“Whether *Sootan Salim* and my predecessor exercised pressure on the *Natal* Council of Justice, in order to declare *Si Pamaga* guilty, is unknown to me. But not unknown to me is the fact that General Vandamme exercised pressure in the case of the declarations made to prove the man’s innocence. Without at that time understanding the intention of it, I frankly objected to this . . . inaccuracy, which went so far that I felt it my duty to refuse to add my signature to some of the depositions, and there you have at last the

affair in which I had 'crossed' the General. You will now also understand the reference in the words which concluded my answer to the strictures on my financial administration, the words in which I requested to be spared any considerations of indulgence."

"It certainly was very strong, for a man of your years!" said Duclari.

"I thought it natural. But one thing is certain, the General was evidently not accustomed to anything like this. And also that I suffered a good deal from the consequences of the affair. Oh, no, Verbrugge, I see what you are going to say; but I certainly never *regretted it*. And I must even add that I should not have confined myself to simply protesting against the manner in which the General questioned the witnesses, nor to refusing my signature to some of the depositions, if at that time I could have guessed what I only knew afterwards, viz., that it was all the upshot of a deliberate pre-determination to make out a case against my predecessor. I imagined that the General, convinced of *Si Pamaga's* innocence, allowed himself to be carried away by an estimable desire to save an innocent victim from the results of a judicial error, in so far as this was still possible after the lash and the branding. This view certainly allowed me to protest against falsity, but the latter offence did not make me so indignant as I should have been if I had known that it was not a question of saving an innocent man, but that the falsity was practised for the purpose of destroying, at the expense of my predecessor's honour and welfare, the proofs that stood in the way of the General's policy."

"And what happened further to your predecessor?" asked Verbrugge.

"Fortunately for him he had already left for Java before the General arrived again at *Padang*. He appears to have been able to justify himself before the Government at *Batavia*; at least he remained in the service. The Resident of *Ayer-Bangie*, who had signed the order of execution, was . . ."

"Suspended?"

"Of course! You see that I was not so very far wrong when I said in my epigram that the Governor ruled by suspending us."

"And what became of all those suspended officers?"

"Oh, there were many more! All of them, one after another, were reinstated. Some of them have since occupied very important positions."

"And *Sootan Salim*?"

"The General took him to *Padang* a prisoner, and thence he was exiled to *Java*. He is to this day at *Tjanjor* in the *Preanger Regencies*. When I was there in 1846, I paid him a visit. Do you remember, Tine, what I came to *Tjanjor* for?"

"No, Max, I have quite forgotten."

"Well, of course, one can't remember everything! I was there to be married, gentlemen!"

"But," asked Duclari, "as you are telling us so much, may I ask whether it is true that at *Padang* you fought so many duels?"

"Yes, a good many, and there was cause for it. I have already told you that at such an outpost the Governor's favour is for many people the measure by which to adjust their good-will. Most of them therefore were very *ill-disposed* to me, and this frequently went as far as rudeness. I, on the other hand, was of course irritable. An unacknowledged bow, a taunt about the 'silliness of a man who wants to fight the General,' an allusion to my poverty, to my going hungry, to the 'poor food attached to moral independence' . . . all this, you will readily understand, embittered me. Many, especially among the officers, knew that the General rather liked to hear that duels were fought, and especially with a man so deeply in disgrace as I was. Maybe therefore they purposely provoked my sensitiveness. I also sometimes fought a duel for another whom I considered wronged. Anyhow, duelling at that time and out there was the order of the day, and it happened more than once that I had two appointments for one morning. Oh, there is a great deal that's attractive in duelling, especially with swords. You will, however, understand that now I would not do that sort of thing,

even though the occasion for it were just as serious as in those days . . . just come here, Max — no, do not catch that insect — come here! Listen to me, you must never catch butterflies. That poor little thing has first crawled about quite a long time on a tree as a caterpillar; that wasn't at all a jolly life! Now it has just got wings, and wants to fly about a little in the air, and enjoy itself, and look for food in the flowers, and it harms no one . . . look, isn't it much nicer to see it flutter about like this?"

And so the conversation passed from duels to butterflies, then to the mercy of the just man towards his beasts, to the teasing and torturing of animals, to the *loi Grammont*, to the National Assembly that passed this law, to the Republic, and goodness knows what else!

At last Havelaar rose. He excused himself to his guests, as he had business to attend to. When the next day the Controller called at his office, that officer was not aware that the new Assistant-Resident, after the conversation in the front veranda on the previous day, had ridden out to *Parang-Koodyang* — the district of the "outrageous abuses" — and had only returned thence early that morning.

I would ask the reader to believe that Havelaar was too well-mannered to talk so much at his own table as I have made it appear in the last chapters, as though he had monopolized the conversation with a complete neglect of his duties as a host, which surely prescribed that he should leave or afford his guests the opportunity of "coming forward." I have taken a couple of haphazard instances, from the mass of material before me, and might have continued the table-talks a great deal longer, with less difficulty than it gave me to cut them short. I trust, however, that what has been described will be sufficient to justify to some extent the outline I gave earlier of Havelaar's nature and qualities, and that the reader will follow, not without some sympathetic interest, the adventures that awaited him and his at *Rangkas-Betoong*.

The small family lived quietly. Havelaar was often out in the

daytime, and spent half the nights in his office. The relation between him and the Commandant of the small garrison was of the pleasantest, and also in the family intercourse with the Controller there was not a trace of the differentiation made on the score of rank, which otherwise in India so often renders the relations stiff and tedious. To the Regent, Havelaar's love of giving assistance where it was possible was often a most welcome relief, and there was no doubt he was well pleased with his "elder brother." Finally, the sweetness of Mrs. Havelaar was no small contribution to a most agreeable intercourse with the few Europeans in the place and with the Native Chiefs. The official correspondence with the Resident at *Serang* bore evidence of mutual friendliness, and the orders of the Resident were carried out with a conscientiousness equal to the courtesy with which they were given.

Tine's household was soon placed on a proper footing. After a long wait the furniture arrived from *Batavia*, *ketimons* were pickled, and when Max told any stories at the table it was no longer now for want of eggs for an omelette, although the living of the small family continued to show evidences that the intended economy was scrupulously practised.

Mrs. Slotering rarely left her house, and only took tea with the Havelaars in the veranda a few times. She spoke little, and always continued to keep a watchful eye on everyone who approached her own or Havelaar's house. They had, however, become accustomed to what they had begun to call her *monomania*, and soon took no more notice of it.

Everything seemed to breathe a spirit of peace, for to Max and Tine it was comparatively a trifle to accommodate themselves to the privations unavoidable at an inland post remote from the main road. As no bread was baked at the place, they ate no bread. They might have ordered it from *Serang*, but the cost of carriage would have been too high. Max knew as well as anyone that there were various means of having bread brought to *Rangkas-Betoong* without paying for it, but *unpaid labour*, that cancer of India, was an

abomination to him. There were many things like this which, at *Lebak*, were obtainable by the undue exercise of authority, but not for sale at a reasonable price, and under such conditions Havelaar and his Tine submitted willingly to the absence of them. Had they not experienced worse privations? Had not the poor woman spent months on board an Arab vessel, without other couch than the ship's deck, without other shelter from the sun's heat and the showers of the west monsoon than a small table between the legs of which she had to stick tight? Had she not in that vessel been compelled to be satisfied with a small ration of dry rice and dirty water? And had she not in those and many other circumstances always been contented, so long as she might only be together with her Max?

Yet there was *one* circumstance at *Lebak* which caused her vexation: little Max could not play in the garden because there were so many snakes in it. When she became aware of this and complained of it to Havelaar, he offered the servants a reward for every snake they would catch, but already in a few days he paid so much in premiums that he had to cancel his promise for the future, for even in ordinary circumstances, and without the present urgent necessity of economy, these payments would soon have outrun his means. So it was decided that in future little Max was not to leave the house, and that for fresh air he was to content himself with playing in the front veranda. In spite of this precaution Tine was still anxious all the time, and particularly in the evening, as it is well known how often snakes will crawl into the houses and conceal themselves for warmth in the bedrooms.

It is true, one finds snakes and similar vermin everywhere in India, but at the larger head-centres, where the populations live close together, they are of course more rarely found than in the wilder regions, such as *Rangkas-Betoong*. If, however, Havelaar could have decided to have his grounds cleared of weeds to the edge of the ravine, the snakes, though no doubt still appearing from time to time in the garden, would never have been found in such num-

bers as now. The nature of snakes makes them prefer darkness and shelter to the light of open spaces; therefore, had Havelaar's grounds been kept in proper order, these reptiles would only have left the scrub of the ravine unintentionally when losing their way. But Havelaar's grounds were not kept in proper order, and I must give the reasons for this, as they afford a further insight into the abuses that prevail almost universally in Netherlands India.

The houses of the Commandants in the interior stand in grounds belonging to the community, in so far as one may speak of communal property in a country where the Government appropriates everything. Suffice it to say that these grounds do not belong to the official occupant himself. The latter would, if this were the case, be careful not to buy or hire grounds of which the maintenance exceeded his means. Now whenever the land belonging to the house reserved for him is too large to be kept in proper order, it is, in the midst of the luxurious vegetation of the tropics, liable in a short space of time to become a wilderness. And yet one rarely or never sees such land in a neglected condition. The traveller even is often amazed at the beautiful park around a Residency. No official in the interior has enough income to have the requisite labour performed for proper payment, and as nevertheless a dignified appearance is indispensable for the residence of the officer in authority, so that the population, so much impressed by external show, may not find in neglect a reason for contempt, the question arises: how then is the end achieved? In most places these officers have the use of a chain-gang, i.e., of criminals sentenced elsewhere; this form of labour, however, was, for more or less valid reasons of a political character, not available at *Bantam*. But even in places where there are such convicts, their number, especially in view of the need of labour for other purposes, is rarely proportionate to the work that would be required for the proper maintenance of large grounds. Other means, therefore, have to be devised, and the summoning of labourers for the performance of *master-service* lies at hand. The Regent or the *Dhemang* who receives a summons of this kind hastens to respond

to it, for he knows only too well that afterwards it would be difficult for the officer who so abuses his authority to punish a native Chief for a similar fault. And so the one's offence becomes the other's licence.

Yet it seems to me that *in some cases* faults of this kind on the part of an officer must not be judged too severely, and especially not according to European conceptions. For the population itself would — perhaps from habit — think it very strange if *always* and *in every case* he kept strictly to the regulations which prescribe the number of those liable to statute labour intended for his grounds, as circumstances may crop up which were not foreseen in framing these regulations. But once the limit is exceeded of what is strictly legal, it becomes difficult to fix a point where such excess becomes criminal tyranny, and the greatest circumspection is the more necessary as one knows that the Chiefs are only waiting for a bad example to follow it to an outrageous extent. The story of a certain King who would not allow neglect of payment for even one grain of salt which he had taken with his frugal meal when at the head of his army he passed through the country, because, he said, this would be the beginning of an injustice which at last would ruin his whole empire, that story or fable must be of Asiatic origin, whether the said King was called *Timoorlenf* or *Nooreddin* or *Jengis Khan*. And just as the sight of sea-dykes suggests the possibility of floods, one may assume that there is a tendency to *such* abuses in a country where *such* lessons are conveyed in story or fable.

Now the small number of people whom Havelaar had legally at his disposal could only keep a very little portion of his grounds in the immediate proximity of the house free from weeds and undergrowth. The remainder was, in a few weeks' time, a complete wilderness. Havelaar wrote to the Resident about some means of making better provision, either by an allowance or by recommending to the Government that, as in other places, chain-gangs should be detached for labour in the Residency of *Bantam*. He received an unfavourable reply, with the remark that, as he well knew, he had the

right to arrange that the persons sentenced by him in the Police Court to "labour on the public roads" be put to work in his grounds. Of course Havelaar knew this, or at any rate he was well enough acquainted with the fact that such disposal of condemned offenders was everywhere looked upon as the most natural thing in the world; but he had never, neither at *Rangkas-Betoong*, nor at *Amboina*, nor at *Menado*, nor at *Natal*, wished to make use of this presumed right. It was repellent to his feelings to have his garden kept in order as a penance for small offences, and often he had asked himself how the Government could allow regulations to continue in existence which might tempt the officer to punish petty, excusable misdemeanours, in proportion not to their magnitude, but to the condition or the extent of his grounds. The very thought that the condemned man, even when justly punished, might imagine that there lurked self-interest in the sentence passed, made him, when he had to punish, always give the preference to imprisonment, however objectionable otherwise.

And so it was that little Max was not allowed to play in the garden, and that Tine did not enjoy the flowers so much as she had anticipated on the day of her arrival at *Rangkas-Betoong*.

It is self-evident that this and similar little vexations had no influence on the frame of mind of a household that possessed so much material for building itself a happy home-life, and it was certainly not attributable to such trifles that Havelaar sometimes came home with a clouded mien, on returning from an official journey, or after hearing someone or other who had requested an audience. We heard from his address to the Chiefs that he meant to do his duty, that he meant to resist injustice, and I also trust that from the conversations I have recorded the reader has learnt to know him as a man well able to get at the bottom of a thing, and bring to light that which was hidden from the sight of *some* others. It might therefore be supposed that not much of what happened in *Lebak* would escape his notice. Then, too, we have seen that many years earlier he had had his eyes on that division, so that on the

very first day, when Verbrugge met him in the *pendoppo* where my story begins, he showed that he was no stranger in his new sphere of work. By investigation on the actual spot he had found confirmed many things which formerly he suspected, and above all from the archives it had become evident to him that the province of which the administration had been entrusted to his care was really in a most deplorable condition.

From letters and notes of his predecessor he found that this officer had made the same observations. The correspondence with the Chiefs contained reproach upon reproach, threat upon threat, and made it quite credible that in the end the former Assistant-Resident should have said, as was reported, that he would address himself direct to the Government if this state of affairs were not put a stop to.

When Verbrugge had informed Havelaar of this, the latter had answered that his predecessor would have acted very wrongly if he had done so, as in any case the Assistant-Resident of *Lebak* had no right to pass by the Resident of *Bantam*, and he had added that also it would not have been in any way justified, as surely it could not be thought that so highly placed an officer would take the side of exploitation and extortion.

And such taking sides was indeed not to be assumed in the sense suggested by Havelaar: that is to say, not as if the Resident were to derive some advantage or gain from those offences. But yet there was undoubtedly a reason which made him most reluctant in doing justice with regard to the complaints of Havelaar's predecessor. We have seen how this predecessor had repeatedly spoken to the Resident about the existing abuses — *aboucher*, as Verbrugge said — and how little this had availed. It is therefore not without interest to inquire why so highly placed an official, who as head of the entire residency was bound as much as, nay more than, the Assistant-Resident to see that justice was done, nearly always judged that there were reasons to arrest the course of justice.

Already at *Serang*, when Havelaar stayed there at the house of the Resident, he had spoken to the latter about the abuses at *Lebak*, and received the reply that this was more or less the case everywhere. This, of course, Havelaar could not deny. For who would pretend that he had ever seen a country where nothing wrong happened? But he held that this was no reason to allow abuses to continue where one found them, especially not when one was emphatically called upon to resist them; also that, after all he knew of *Lebak*, there was here no question of *more or less*, but of *an excessive degree*; to which the Resident replied amongst other things that in the Division *Tjiringheen*, also belonging to *Bantam*, it was still worse.

Now if one accepts, as one may accept, that a Resident derives no direct advantage from extortion and from arbitrary disposal of the population, the question arises: what then induces so many, contrary to honour and duty, to allow such abuses to exist, without acquainting the Government with the fact? And he that reflects on this question must find it particularly strange that one so calmly recognizes the existence of these abuses, as though it were a matter outside reach or competency. I will endeavour to unfold the causes of this.

In general the very task of carrying evil tidings is an unpleasant one, and it really seems as though something of the unfavourable impression they make sticks to him to whose share falls the vexatious duty of communicating such tidings. Now if this fact alone has been proved a sufficient reason for some people to deny, against their better knowledge, the existence of anything unfavourable, how much more must this be the case when one runs the risk, not only of incurring the disfavour which unfortunately appears to be the reward of the carrier of bad news, but of being actually looked upon as the *cause* of the unfavourable condition which one's duty compels one to reveal!

The Government of Netherlands India writes for preference to its masters in the motherland that everything goes well. The Resi-

dents like to report this to the Government. The Assistant-Residents, who in their turn receive hardly anything but favourable statements from their Controllers, prefer, for their part also, to send no disagreeable tidings to the Residents. From this an artificial optimism is born in the official and written dealings with affairs, contrary not only to the truth, but also to the opinion held by those optimists themselves, as that opinion appears whenever they treat those affairs orally, and — stranger still! — often even in contradiction of their own written reports. I could quote many instances of Reports which spoke in the most superlative terms of the favourable conditions in a Residency, but which in the same breath, especially when the *figures* were allowed to speak, gave themselves the lie. These instances would, if the matter were not so serious in view of the ultimate consequences, give cause for laughter and ridicule, and one can only be amazed at the naïveté with which often in such a case the crassest untruths were maintained and accepted, though the writer himself, a few sentences further on, offered the weapons with which to defeat these lies. I shall confine myself to one single example, which, however, I could multiply manifold. Among the documents before me I find the annual Report of a residency. The Resident speaks in glowing terms of the flourishing trade, and asserts that in the whole province the greatest prosperity and industrial activity are to be observed. A little lower down, however, speaking of the slender means at his disposal for circumventing smugglers, he immediately wishes to remove the disagreeable impression that would be made on the Government by the conclusion drawn that in this residency a good deal of customs duty must then be evaded. "No," he says, "there is no need to fear this; little or nothing is smuggled into my residency, for . . . there is so little doing in these parts, that no one would risk his capital in commerce" !!!

I have read a similar Report beginning with the words: "During the past year the peace of the district has remained peaceful." Such sentences certainly bear witness to a very peaceful conviction

that an indulgent Government wishes to enjoy the peace ensured by all those who spare it unpleasant tidings, or who, as they put it: "do not embarrass it with vexatious Reports"!

Where the population does not increase, the fact is attributed to the inexactitude of the enumerations of previous years. Where the revenue from taxation does not rise, one counts it a merit: the intention is by low assessments to encourage agriculture, which is just *now* beginning to develop, and will soon — for preference when the writer of the Report shall have left the district — yield incredible results. Where disturbances have taken place that *cannot* be concealed, they were the work of a few ill-disposed persons who in future need no longer be feared, as now there is *general* contentment. Where distress or famine has thinned the population, it was the result of crop-failure, drought, heavy rains, or something of the kind, but never of bad government.

Before me lies the note of Havelaar's predecessor wherein he ascribed "the departure of people from the district of *Parang-Koodyang* to *outrageous* abuses." This note was *un-official*, and contained matter on which that officer had to *speak* to the Resident of *Bantam*. But in vain did Havelaar search the archives for evidence that his predecessor had plainly and frankly called the same matter by its true name in a *public service-minute*.

Briefly put, the official Reports from the officials to the Government, and therefore also those based on them to the Government in the motherland, are for the greater and principal part *untrue*.

I know that this is a grave charge, but I stand by it, and am in a position to support it with proofs. Anyone who may feel vexed at my expressing my opinion without disguise should remember how many millions of money and how many human lives England would have been spared if someone in that country had succeeded in opening the eyes of the nation to the true state of affairs in British India, and how much gratitude everyone would have owed to the man who had shown the courage to be the Job's messenger,

before it was too late to redress the wrong in a less sanguinary manner than meanwhile became inevitable.

I said I could prove my charge. Where necessary, I shall show that often there was famine in districts that were praised as examples of prosperity, and that frequently a population which was reported to be peaceful and contented was on the point of bursting out into raging rebellion. It is not my intention to supply these proofs in *this* book, although I trust that no one will lay it down without believing that they exist.

For the moment I will confine myself to one more example of the absurd optimism of which I have spoken, an example which anyone, be he *au fait* with the affairs of India or not, will readily understand.

Every Resident supplies monthly a statement of the amount of rice imported into his province, or exported therefrom. Now when one takes note of the quantity of rice transported according to these joint statements *from* residencies in Java *to* residencies in Java, one will find that this quantity amounts to many thousands of *pikols* *more* than the rice which, according to the same joint statements, is imported *into* residencies in Java *from* residencies in Java.

I shall for the present be silent about the opinion one must inevitably conceive of the insight of a Government that accepts such statements and publishes them, and only wish to draw the reader's attention to the *object* of this falsity.

The percentage reward to European and native officials for products that are to be sold in Europe had so pushed rice-culture into the background that in some regions famine occurred which *could* not be juggled away from the sight of the nation. I have already said that then instructions were issued to the effect that things must not again be allowed to go quite so far. Among the many consequences of these instructions were also the statements I have referred to of imports and exports of rice, so that the Government might constantly keep an eye on the fluctuating ebb and flow of

that article of food. *Export* from a residency represents prosperity, *Import*, relative want.

Now when one examines and compares those statements, they seem to show that rice is everywhere so abundant *that all the residencies together export more rice than all the residencies together import*. I repeat that in this there is no question of Imports and Exports oversea, the statement of which is a separate one. The conclusion then is the interesting thesis *that in Java there is more rice than there is*. That surely is prosperity!

I have said already that the wish never to send other than good reports to the Government would reach the ridiculous, if the results of it all were not so tragic. For what improvement may be hoped with regard to so much wrong, if there is a predetermined purpose to twist and distort everything in those reports to the Government? What, for instance, may be expected from a population which, by nature gentle and submissive, has for years upon years complained of oppression, when one Resident after another is seen to retire on furlough or pension, or called away to another office, without the slightest thing being done to redress the grievances under which that population is bowed down? Will not the bent spring in the end recoil? Will not the long suppressed discontent — suppressed in order that one may continue to deny its existence — at last pass to rage, to despair, to madness? Is there not in sight, at the end of this road, a *Jacquerie*?

And where will then the officials be who for so many years have succeeded one another without ever striking the idea that there is something higher than the favour of Government? Something higher than the “approbation of the Governor-General”? Where then will they be, the writers of cowardly Reports who blind the eyes of Government with their untruths? Will they, who previously lacked the courage to put on paper a resolute word, now suddenly gird on the sword, and save the Dutch possessions for the Netherlands? Will they return to the Netherlands the treasure that will be required to quell insurrection, to prevent complete

revolution? Will they bring back to life the thousands that will have fallen through their guilt?

And those officials, those Controllers and Residents, are not the *most* guilty. It is the Government itself, which, as though struck with incomprehensible blindness, encourages, invites, and rewards the tendering of favourable Reports. And this is particularly the case where there is a question of oppression of the population by native Chiefs.

Many attribute the protection of the Chiefs to the ignoble calculation that the latter, having to display pomp and splendour in order to exercise over the population that influence which the Government needs to uphold its authority, would require for this a much higher remuneration than they receive now, if they were not left the liberty to supplement the deficiency by unlawful disposal of the possessions and the labour of the people. However this may be, certain it is that the Government applies the instructions which are said to protect the Javanese against extortion and robbery only when such application is unavoidable. Most frequently a reason is found in considerations of high policy transcending ordinary judgment, and often evolved from the imagination, to spare *this* Regent or *that* Chief; and indeed it is in India an opinion which has almost become a proverb, that the Government would rather dismiss ten Residents than one Regent. And those pretended political reasons, if having any foundation at all, are usually based on false information, as every Resident is personally interested in giving an exalted impression of the influence of his Regents over the population, so that he may some day shield himself with it if remarks should be made about too great an indulgence towards those Chiefs.

I will for the present pass over the abominable hypocrisy of the humane-sounding instructions — and of the oaths! — which protect the Javanese . . . on paper . . . against tyranny, and invite the reader to remember how Havelaar, in repeating those oaths, acted in a manner that suggested contempt. For the moment I will

only point to the difficult position of a man who, in an entirely different sense than by virtue of a spoken formula, considers himself bound by his duty.

For Havelaar this difficulty was greater even than it would have been in the case of some others, because his nature was gentle, in entire contradiction to his penetration, which the reader will by now have discovered to have been uncommonly keen. He, therefore, had not only to wrestle with the fear of men or with anxiety about his career and promotion, nor merely with the duties devolving on him as a husband and father, he had to conquer an enemy in his own heart. He could not without suffering see sorrow; it would take too long to give examples of the manner in which he would protect an opponent against himself even where he had been injured and insulted. He told Duclari and Verbrugge how in his youth he had found something alluring in sword-duelling, which was the truth . . . but he did not add how, after wounding his antagonist, he would be moved to tears, and would, like a sister of mercy, tend his former enemy until he had recovered. I might relate how at *Natal*, when a chained convict had fired on him, he called the man before him, spoke kindly to him, had him fed and given more liberty than the others, because he fancied he had discovered that the exasperation of this prisoner was the result of too severe a sentence elsewhere passed. It was usual for the gentleness of his heart to be either denied or thought ridiculous. Denied by those who confounded his heart with his mind. Thought ridiculous by those who could not understand how a sensible person could take trouble to save a fly that had become entangled in a spider's web. Denied again then by everyone — except Tine — who after this heard him abusing those "stupid insects" and "stupid nature" that created such insects.

But there was still another way of dragging him down from the pedestal on which those around him — whether they liked him or not — felt morally compelled to place him. "Yes, he *is* witty; but . . . his wit is volatile"; or "He *is* intellectual, but . . . he does

not use his intellect to any sensible purpose," or "Yes, he is kind-hearted, but . . . he parades his kind-heartedness!"

I have no wish to take sides about his wit or his intellect. But his heart? Poor struggling flies which he saved when there was no one near, will *you* not defend his heart against the charge of "parading"? But you have flown away, and have not troubled about Havelaar, you who could not know that some day he would be in need of your testimony!

Was it "parading" on Havelaar's part, when at *Natal* he jumped into the river-estuary after a dog named *Sappho*, because he feared that the animal, still a pup, could not yet swim well enough to escape the sharks which are so numerous there? It seems to me more difficult to believe in such "parading" of kind-heartedness than in the kind-heartedness itself.

I summon you, the many who have known Havelaar, if you are not frozen by winter cold and death, like the rescued flies, or withered in the heat yonder on the Line! I summon you to bear witness to his heart, all you that have known him! Now especially do I summon you with confidence, as you have no need now to look where the block must be hooked in to drag him down from whatever little height!

Meanwhile, however patchy it may seem, I will here make room for some lines from his hand, which may perhaps render such testimony superfluous. Max was once far, very far from wife and child. He had been compelled to leave her behind in India, and was in Germany. With the mental quickness which I attribute to him, and which I am ready to defend if anyone should wish to assail it, he had mastered the language of the country where he had been some months. Here are the lines,¹ which at the same time paint the devotion that bound him to those belonging to him: —

¹ In the Dutch version of *Max Havelaar* they appeared in German, the language in which Multatuli wrote them. For the benefit of English readers who do not know that language I have given them in English translation. *Trsl.*

— "My child, that is the ninth hour striking: hark!
The night wind murmurs, and the air grows cool,
Perhaps too cool for you; your forehead glows!
All day you have been busy with wild games;
You must be tired: come now, your *Tekar*¹ waits."

— "O, mother, leave me a few moments yet!
It is so cosy resting here . . . and there,
Inside upon my mat, I sleep at once,
And know not even what I'm dreaming! Here
I straightway whisper to you what I dream,
And ask you what may be the meaning . . . hark,
What was that sound? "

— "*A klappa*² that fell down."

— "And does that hurt the *klappa*?"

— "I think not,

For neither fruit nor stone, they say, have feeling."

— "But has not even a flower feeling? "

— "No,

They say it has no feeling."

— "Why then, mother,

When yesterday I broke the *Pukul ampat*,³
You said: that makes the lovely flower feel pain? "

— "My child, the *Pukul ampat* was so fair,
You roughly tore apart the tender leaves,
I felt quite sorry for the gentle flower.
E'en though the flower itself may feel it not,
I felt it for the flower that was so fair."

— "But, mother, are you also fair? "

— "No, child,

I think not."

— "But then *you* have feeling, surely."

— "Yes, men have feeling . . . but not all alike."

— "Can anything give *you* pain? Does it hurt you
When in your lap my head rests heavily? "

— "No, that gives me no pain! "

— "And, mother, I . . .

Have *I* too feeling? "

— "Certainly! Remember

How once you tripped, and falling on a stone,
You hurt your little hand, and cried aloud.

¹ Small mat.

² Coco-nut.

³ A flower that opens at 4 p. m. and closes at dawn.

And once again you wept when *Saudeen*¹ told you
 That yonder in the hills a little lamb
 Fell in a deep ravine, and died alone.
 Then flowed your tears a long time . . . *that* was feeling."
 — "But, mother, is then feeling pain?"

— "Yes, often!

And yet not always, sometimes not! You know,
 When little sister catches at your hair,
 And crows, her little face squeezed against yours,
 Then you laugh merrily, that's also feeling."

— "And little sister then . . . she cries so often:
 Is that for pain? Has then she also feeling?"

— "Perhaps, my child, but that we do not know,
 For she is yet too small to tell us it."

— "But, mother . . . listen! what was that?"

— "A deer

Belated in the woods, and hurrying now
 To find its home again, and there to rest
 With other deer it loves and longs for."

— "Mother,

Has such a deer like me a little sister?
 And mother also?"

— "I don't know, my child."

— "That would be sad, if it were not so, mother!
 But, over there . . . what gleams there in the shrubs?
 See how it hops and flits . . . is that a spark?"
 — "It is a firefly."

— "May I try to catch it?"

— "You may, but the small creature is so soft,
 You surely then will hurt it, and as soon
 As all too roughly with your hand you touch it,
 The poor thing sickens, dies, and gleams no more!"

— "That were a pity! No, I shall not catch it!
 See, now it disappears . . . no, it comes this way . . .
 But I won't catch it! Now it flies away,
 And is quite joyful that I have not caught it.
 There, high it goes! . . . High up there . . . what is that,
 Are those too, yonder, little fireflies?"

— "Those

Are stars."

— "Oh, count them! one, and ten, a thousand!
 How many may there be?"

— "I cannot tell,

¹ Name of a Malay.

For no one yet has counted all the stars."

— "Say, mother, does e'en *He* not count the stars? "

— "No, love, not even *He*."

— "Is it far off

Up there where all the stars dwell? "

— "Very far! "

— "But have these stars, so high above us, feeling?

And would they, if I touched them with my hand,

At once too sicken, die, and lose their gleam,

Just as the little fly? — See, still it flutters! —

Say, would it also hurt the stars? "

— "Ah, no,

It would not hurt the stars! But your small hand

Could never reach so high, they dwell too far."

— "And cannot *His* hand catch the distant stars? "

— "Not even *His*: not any being's! "

— "Pity!

I'd love to give you one! When I grow up,

Then *I shall love you, love you till I can!* "

The child, asleep at last, of feeling dreamt,

Of distant stars that with his hands he caught. . . .

Long still the mother slept not! But she dreamt,

She too, thinking of one far off. . . .

Yes, at the risk of writing a patchy book, I have here given a place to these lines. I wish to neglect no opportunity of making known the man who plays the leading rôle in my story, so that in the reader's heart he may awaken some interest, when hereafter dark clouds gather above his head.



CHAPTER XV

HAVELAAR's predecessor, who certainly had wished to act rightly, but at the same time appeared to have been somewhat afraid of the high disfavour of the Government — the man had many children, and no means — had then, it seems, rather *spoken* to the Resident of what he himself called *outrageous* abuses, than named them frankly in an official Report. He knew that a Resident is not fond of receiving a written Report, which remains deposited in his archives, and may afterwards appear as evidence that his attention had been in good time drawn to this or that wrong, whilst an oral communication leaves him, without risk, the choice between dealing with the complaint or not. Such oral communications usually resulted in an interview with the Regent, who, of course, denied everything and insisted on proofs. Then the people were summoned who had had the temerity to complain, and crawling at the feet of the *Adhipatti*, they prayed for pardon. "No, the buffalo had not been taken from them for nothing; they quite believed that double the price would be paid for it." "No, they had not been called away from their fields to labour without payment in the *Sawahs* of the Regent, for they knew very well that the *Adhipatti* would afterwards liberally reward them." "They had made their complaint in a moment of baseless discontent . . . they had been mad, and begged that they might be duly punished for such outrageous disrespect!"

Then the Resident knew perfectly well what he was to think of this retraction of the complaint, but still that retraction gave him a splendid chance of maintaining the Regent in office and honour, and he himself was spared the disagreeable task of "embarrassing" the Government with an unfavourable Report. The reckless

informants were punished with *rattan* birchings, the Regent had triumphed, and the Resident returned to the head-centre, with the pleasant consciousness of again having so successfully "managed" that affair.

But then what was the Assistant-Resident to do when next day again other complaints came to him? Or — and this frequently happened — when the same complainants returned and retracted their retraction? Was he *again* to write the matter in his notebook, *again* to speak about it to the Resident, *again* to see the same tragic farce enacted, and all this at the risk of passing in the end for a man who laid charges time and again — and that stupidly and maliciously — which always had to be dismissed as unfounded? What was to become of the highly necessary friendly relations between the principal Native Chief and the first European official, when it appeared as though the latter continually lent an ear to false complaints against that Chief? And above all, what happened to those poor complainants after they returned to their village, in the power of the district- or village-head whom they had charged as the instrument of the Regent's tyranny?

Let us see what became of those complainants. Those that were able to escape, escaped. That was why so many Bantammers roamed about in the neighbouring provinces! That was why there were so many inhabitants of *Lebak* among the rebels in the *Lampung* districts! That was why Havelaar, in his address to the Chiefs, had asked: "What is this, that so many houses stand empty in the villages, and why do many prefer the shade of alien woods to the coolness of the forests of *Bantan Kedool*?"

But not everyone was able to escape. The man whose body in the morning was seen to be floating down the river, after his having the previous night, secretly, hesitatingly, tremulously, asked for an audience with the Assistant-Resident . . . he no longer needed escape. Perhaps it might be looked upon as a humane act to save him by sudden death from a little longer life. For he was spared the ill-treatment that awaited him on his return to his

village, and the *rattan*-scourging which is the penalty of all those who for a moment might imagine that they were not beasts, not inanimate blocks of wood or stone; the penalty for him who, in a moment of madness, had believed that there was *Justice* in the land, and that the Assistant-Resident had the wish and the power to maintain that *Justice*. . . .

Was it not indeed better to prevent that man from returning the next day to the Assistant-Resident — in accordance with the latter's message to him in the evening — and to stifle his complaint in the yellow waters of the *Tjioodyoong*, which would carry him gently out to sea, accustomed as they were to being the bearers of these fraternal offerings from the sharks of the interior to the sharks of the main?

And Havelaar knew all this! Does the reader feel what tortured his heart when reflecting that he was called to do justice, and that in this he was responsible to a higher power than that of a Government which, indeed, prescribed justice in its laws, but often preferred not to see it actually applied? Does the reader feel how he was tossed on the horns of doubt, not as to what it was his duty to do, but as to the *manner in which* he had to act?

He had started with gentleness. He had spoken to the *Adhipatti* as "elder brother"; and anyone who might think that I, prejudiced in favour of the hero of my story, perhaps unduly exalt the manner of his speech, should hear how once, after such an interview, the Regent sent him his *Patteh*¹ to thank him for the kindness of his words, and how, long after this, the *Patteh*, in a conversation with the Controller Verbrugge (after Havelaar had ceased to be Assistant-Resident of *Lebak*, therefore when nothing more was either to be hoped or feared from him), at the remembrance of his words exclaimed, still deeply impressed: "Never yet has any lord spoken as he!"

Yes, he wished to help, to set right, to save, not to destroy! He felt pity for the Regent. He, who knew how financial need may

¹ Secretary, or factotum.

press, especially when it leads to humiliation and insult, looked for reasons of condonation. The Regent was old, he was the head of a family whose descendants lived sumptuously in the neighbouring provinces, where much coffee was harvested, and therefore high emoluments were enjoyed. Was it not galling to him, as regards mode of living, to have to take a much lower place than his younger relatives? Besides, swayed by fanaticism, the man fancied that, as his years increased, he might purchase the salvation of his soul by subsidized pilgrimages to Mecca and alms to prayer-droning idlers. The officers who had preceded Havelaar at *Lebak* had not always set good examples. And finally the largeness of the *Lebak* family of the Regent, which lived entirely at his expense, made it difficult for him to return to the right way.

In this manner Havelaar looked for reasons to defer all severity, and to try again and still again what might be accomplished with gentleness.

And he even went beyond gentleness. With a generosity that was reminiscent of the errors that had made him so poor, he continually advanced money to the Regent on his own responsibility, so that necessity might not urge the Chief too powerfully to offence, and as usual he forgot his own interest so far that he was prepared to reduce himself and those belonging to him to the strictly necessary, in order to succour the Regent with the little he might still be able to spare from his income.

If it might still seem necessary to prove the kindness with which Havelaar fulfilled his difficult duty, such proof might be found in an oral message he gave to the Controller when the latter was on one occasion departing for *Serang*: "Tell the Resident that, hearing of the abuses that here take place, he must not think that I am indifferent to them. I only do not at once report them officially because I wish to save the Regent, whom I pity, from too great severity, as I wish first to try to bring him to a sense of his duty by kindness."

Havelaar was often out for days. When he was at home, he was

usually to be found in the room which on our plan we have represented as the seventh space. There he was nearly always writing, or receiving the persons who asked for an audience. He had chosen that place because there he was in the vicinity of his Tine, who usually stayed in the next room. For they were so closely bound up in each other that Max, even when he was busy with some work that demanded all his attention and exertion, constantly felt the need of seeing or hearing her. It was often amusing how he would suddenly address a word to her which arose in his mind with regard to the subjects that occupied him, and how quickly she, without knowing what he was dealing with, was able to follow the sense of his thoughts, which in fact he usually did not even explain to her, as though it were self-evident that she would know what he meant. Often too, when he was dissatisfied with his own labour, or with disappointing news just received, he would jump up and say something unkind to her, although she was in no way responsible for his discontent! But she liked to hear it, because it was a proof the more how Max confused her with himself. Nor was there ever any question of regret for such seeming harshness, or, on the other hand, of forgiveness. This to them would have seemed like someone begging his own pardon for having in anger struck himself on his own head.

Indeed she knew him so well that she knew exactly when she should be there to give him a moment's relaxation . . . exactly when he was in need of her advice, and no less exactly when she was to leave him alone.

In that room Havelaar was sitting one morning when the Controller came in with a letter, just received, in his hand.

"This is a difficult matter, Mr. Havelaar," he said on entering. "Very difficult!"

Now when I say this letter simply contained an order from Havelaar to explain why there had been a change in the prices of wood-work and labour, the reader will think that the Controller Verbrugge very soon considered a thing difficult. I therefore

hasten to add that a good many others would have found some difficulty in answering that simple question.

Some years before a prison had been built at *Rangkas-Betoong*. Now it is a generally known thing that the officials in the interior of Java understand the art of erecting buildings that are worth thousands of guilders, without expending more than just as many hundreds. This gives them the stamp of efficiency and zeal in the service of the country. The difference between the moneys spent and the value of what has been obtained for them is made up by unpaid supplies or unpaid labour. For some years there have been instructions prohibiting this. Whether they are carried out is not here the question. Nor either whether the Government *wishes* that they shall be carried out with a strictness that would burden the estimates of the Building Department. I suppose with this it is as with many other instructions that look so humane on paper.

Now there were yet many other buildings required to be erected at *Rangkas-Betoong*, and the engineers charged with preparing the plans had asked for quotations as to local prices of wages and material. Havelaar had charged the Controller with a careful inquiry into this, and recommended to him that he should give the prices in accordance with fact, without reference to what happened formerly. When Verbrugge had carried out his instructions, it appeared that the prices did not tally with the quotations of a few years earlier. And the fact that the reason of this difference was asked for was what Verbrugge thought such a difficult matter. Havelaar, who knew perfectly well what was behind this apparently so simple question, answered that he would give him his opinion about this difficulty in writing, and I find among the documents before me a copy of the letter which appears to have been the result of this promise.

If the reader should complain that I delay him with a correspondence about the prices of wood-work, with which it would seem he has nothing to do, I must beg that he will not leave uncon-

sidered the fact that in reality the question is an entirely different one, viz., *the condition of the official Indian administration*, and that the letter which I here reproduce not only casts another ray of light upon the artificial optimism I have already spoken of, but sketches also the difficulties one has to face who, like Havelaar, wished to go his way straight forward and without looking back.

“No. 114. *Rangkas-Betoong*, 15th March, 1856.
“*To the Controller of Lebak.*

“When I returned to you the letter of the Director of Public Works, dated 16th February last, No. 271/354, I requested that you should answer the questions therein asked, after consultation with the Regent, with due observance of what I wrote in my missive of the 5th inst., No. 97.

“The missive contained some general hints with regard to that which may be considered equitable and just in fixing the prices of materials which the population have to supply to, and by order of, the Government.

“In your missive of the 8th inst., No. 6, you — I believe according to your best knowledge — complied with my request, so that I, relying on your local experience and that of the Regent, presented these quotations, exactly as supplied by you, to the Resident.

“This was followed by a missive from that Head Officer, dated 11th inst., No. 326, asking for particulars as to the reason for the difference between the prices quoted by me and those ruling during the erection of a prison in 1853 and 1854.

“I, of course, placed that letter in your hands, and instructed you orally now to justify your statement, which should have been the more possible to you as you were able to refer to the instructions given to you in my minute of the 5th inst., which instructions we have also repeatedly discussed orally

“So far all is straightforward and regular.

"But yesterday you came to my office with the letter of the Resident in your hand, and began to speak of the difficulty of dealing with its contents. I again observed in you a sort of timidity about giving some things their true name, an attitude to which I have already several times drawn your attention, amongst others recently in the presence of the Resident, an attitude which for short I call halfness, and against which I have often given you friendly warning.

"Halfness leads to nothing. *Half-good is not good. Half-true is un-true.*

"For full salary, for full rank, after a clear and *complete* oath, one must do one's *complete* duty.

"If it may sometimes require courage to carry it out, one should possess that courage.

"For my own part I should not have the courage to lack that courage. For, apart from dissatisfaction with oneself, which must be the consequence of neglect of duty or half-heartedness, the search for easier roundabout ways, the desire to avoid conflict always and everywhere, the tendency to 'diplomacy,' inevitably causes more anxiety, and indeed more danger, than one will meet on the straightforward path.

"During the course of a very important matter which is now under consideration by the Government, and in which you really should be officially concerned, I have tacitly left you, so to speak, neutral, and have only alluded to it with a smile now and then.

"When, for instance, recently your Report on the causes of distress and famine among the population had come before me, and I wrote on it: '*All this may be the truth, but it is not the whole truth, nor the principal truth. The chief cause lies deeper,*' you admitted this frankly, and I did not avail myself of my *right* to demand that in the circumstances you should *name* that principal truth.

"I had many reasons for such forbearance, and amongst others this one, that I felt it would be unjust all of a sudden to exact from

You something which many others in your place would no more do than you, to force *You* all of a sudden to bid farewell to the routine of concealment and fear of men which is not so much *your* fault as that of the training you have unfortunately received. Finally, I wished first to set you an example of how much simpler and easier it is to do one's *whole* duty than only *half* of it.

"Now, however, after I have had the honour of supervising your work so many days longer, and of repeatedly giving you the opportunity of becoming acquainted with principles which, unless I am greatly mistaken, must triumph in the end, I should like you to adopt these. I should like you to make yours entirely that strength which is not absolutely wanting in you, but which has been weakened by disuse, and which seems indispensable in order to say always frankly and according to your best knowledge what has to be said, and to let go, therefore, altogether the unmanly hesitation to come forward openly and courageously with the truth about any matter whatsoever.

"I now, therefore, expect a simple but *complete* statement of what seems to you to be the cause of the difference in prices between *now* and 1853 or 1854.

"I earnestly trust that you will not look upon any sentence or phrase of this letter as written with any intention of wounding your feelings. I hope that you have become sufficiently acquainted with me to know that I say neither more nor less than I mean, and in addition I also give you the assurance that in reality my remarks apply less to *You* personally than to the school in which you have been trained for the position of an Indian Civil Servant.

"This extenuating circumstance would, however, lose all force if, still being with me and serving the Government under my guidance, you continued to follow the bad old routine which I am opposing.

"You will have noticed that I have dispensed with the title '*Your-very-noble-severity*': I was sick of it. Do so too, and let our '*very-nobility*' and, when necessary, our '*severity*,' show else-

where, and particularly in another form, than in these annoying and sense-destroying titles.

"The Assistant-Resident of Lebak

"MAX HAVELAAR."

The answer to this letter inculcated some of Havelaar's predecessors, and proved that he was not so very much mistaken when he included, among the reasons that might plead extenuation for the Regent, the "*bad examples of an earlier time.*"

In publishing this letter, I have anticipated, in order to emphasize in advance the fact that Havelaar had to expect but little help from the Controller as soon as it would become necessary to give their proper names to altogether different and more important matters, considering that this officer, who unquestionably was a right-minded man, had to be thus addressed to make him speak the truth where it was but a question of price-quotations of timber, stone, mortar, and wages. It will thus be realized that he had not only to fight the power of the persons who benefited by criminality, but also the cowardice of those who — though condemning this criminality as much as he did — did not consider themselves called upon or able to make the necessary courageous stand against it.

Perhaps also, after reading that letter, one will drop some of the contempt for the slavish submissiveness of the Javanese who, in the presence of his Chief, cravenly retracts the once-preferred charge, however well-founded. For if one reflects that there was so much cause of fear, even on the part of the European official, who after all might be considered to be less exposed to vengeance, what then awaited the poor native who, in a village far from the head-centre, was left entirely in the power of the oppressors whom he had accused? Is it to be wondered at that those poor people, terrified at the results of their temerity, sought to escape or mitigate those results by abject submission?

And it was not only the Controller Verbrugge who did his duty with a nervousness that would have befitted dereliction of duty.

The *Djaksa* also, the Native Chief who in the provincial Council fills the position of public prosecutor, entered Havelaar's house for preference at night, unnoticed and unattended. He that was appointed to prevent theft, whose duty it was to catch the sneak-thief, he sneaked, as though he himself were the thief that feared to be caught, with hushed sound of footstep through the back entrance into the house, first having assured himself that there were no visitors who might afterwards betray him as guilty of doing his duty.

Was it to be wondered at that Havelaar's soul was saddened, and that it was more than ever necessary for Tine to go into his room and cheer him up, when she saw how he sat there resting his head dejectedly on his hand?

And yet for him the greatest obstacle was not to be found in the timidity of his assistants, nor in the accessory cowardice of those that had first appealed to him. No, even, if needs be, he would do justice all alone, with or without the help of others, indeed, *against* all, even if it were against the very people who were in need of justice! For he knew the influence he had on the People, he knew how, when once the poor oppressed ones were called upon to repeat aloud and before the Court of Justice what at eve or at night they had whispered to him in privacy, he knew how he had the power to stimulate them, how the inspiration of his words would be stronger than the fear of revenge on the part of District-Chief or Regent. It was not then the fear that those whom he meant to protect would desert their own cause, which restrained him. But it cost him so much to lay a charge against that old *Adhipatti*: *that* was the reason of his internal struggle! For on the other hand again he was not at liberty to yield to this reluctance, since the entire population, apart even from their absolute claim to justice, had an equally strong claim to pity.

No fear of any trouble to himself had a part in his hesitation. For though he knew how reluctant in general the Government is to receive charges against a Regent, and how much easier it is for

some of the powers to reduce a European official to beggary than to punish a native Chief, he had a special reason for believing that at this exact moment, in dealing with such a matter, principles different from the usual ones would prevail. It is true that, even without this opinion, he would have done his duty just the same, in fact all the more as the danger to him and his appeared greater than ever. We have seen that it was exactly the difficult task that attracted him, and that he had almost a craving for self-sacrifice. But he imagined that the lure of such sacrifice did not exist here, and feared that, if in the end he would have to engage in a serious battle against injustice, he would have to forego the chivalrous pleasure of having begun the struggle as the weaker party.

Yes, this is what he *feared*. He imagined that at the head of the Government there was a Governor-General who would be his ally, and it was an additional peculiarity of his character that this conviction restrained him from severe measures, longer indeed than anything else would have done, because it was repugnant to him to attack Injustice at a moment when he took the cause of Justice to be stronger than usual. Did I not already, in my attempt at describing his nature, say that he was naïve in spite of all his keenness?

Let me try to make it clear how Havelaar had come to form that conviction.

Very few European readers can form an adequate conception of the moral altitude to which a Governor-General must rise in order not to be below the height of his office, and it must, therefore, not be taken as severity of judgment when I say that I hold the opinion that very few persons — perhaps not one — have ever been equal to so exalted a task. I will not now enumerate all the qualities of head and heart that are necessary to it, but would ask that one cast a glance at the dizzying height at which the man is suddenly placed who, but yesterday an ordinary citizen, to-day wields power over millions of subjects. He who until quite recently was lost among his entourage, without rising above it in rank or au-

thority, finds himself all at once, most often unforeseen, raised above a multitude infinitely larger than the small circle which, in spite of its insignificant dimensions, nevertheless hid him entirely from the view; and I believe that I did not exaggerate when I called the height dizzying, which indeed reminds one of the position of one who is seized with vertigo on unexpectedly seeing a precipice in front of him, or of the blindness that strikes us when we are rapidly transferred from complete darkness into dazzling light. The nerves of sight and brain are not proof against such transitions, however extraordinarily strong they might otherwise be.

If then the appointment as Governor-General often carries in its very nature the causes of corruption, even for those who excel in intellect and in heart, what then may be expected from persons who, before their appointment, have already many shortcomings? And assuming for a moment that the King is always correctly advised when he signs his exalted name under the deed in which he expresses himself convinced of the "*faithfulness, zeal and ability*" of the appointed Lieutenant; assuming that the new Viceroy is zealous, faithful and able, it still remains the question whether that zeal, and especially that *ability*, are found in him to a *degree* sufficiently raised above *mediocrity* to satisfy the requirements of his high calling.

For the question cannot be whether the man who at The Hague leaves the King's cabinet as a newly made Governor-General possesses at *that* moment the ability that will be necessary for his new office . . . such a thing is *impossible*! The expression of confidence in his ability can only mean that in an entirely new career, at a given moment, as it were by inspiration, he will know what he cannot have learned at The Hague. In other words, that he is a genius, a genius who must all at once have the knowledge and the power of execution, neither of which he possessed before. Such genius is rare, even among persons who enjoy the favour of Kings.

As I am speaking of geniuses, one realizes that I wish to pass

over what might be said of so many a Governor. Also, I should be loath to introduce pages into my book which would expose the serious portion of the work therein to the suspicion of scandal-mongering. I shall therefore here pass by particulars that would concern definite persons; but as a *general* diagnosis of the complaints of Governors-General I think I must state: *First stage*. Giddiness. Incense-intoxication. Conceit. Unlimited self-confidence. Contempt for others, especially *old chums*. *Second stage*. Exhaustion. Fear. Dejection. Craving for sleep and rest. Excessive confidence in the Council of India. Dependence on the General Secretariate. Nostalgia for a country villa in Holland.

Between these two stages, and as a transition — perhaps even as the cause of such transition — there are attacks of dysentery.

I trust many in India will thank me for this diagnosis. Its application is useful, for one may take it for granted that the patient, who, through over-strain, would in the first period be choked by a gnat, will afterwards — i.e. after the complaint of the stomach! — be able, without inconvenience, to digest camels. Or, to speak more plainly, that an official who “accepts presents, *not with the object of enriching himself*” — for instance, a bunch of bananas worth a couple of farthings — will, in the *first* period of the complaint, be dismissed with disgrace and ignominy, but that a man who has the patience to await the *last* period will, with perfect tranquillity and without any fear of punishment, be able to appropriate the garden where the bananas grew, with also the adjoining gardens . . . and the houses in the neighbourhood . . . and all that may be found in those houses . . . and a few more things, *ad libitum*.

Everyone may profit by this pathologico-philosophical remark, keeping my advice to himself, of course, to prevent excessive competition. . . .

Cursèd! why must indignation and sorrow so often masquerade in the motley of satire? Cursèd! why must a tear, to be understood, be accompanied by a grin? Or is it the fault of my inexperience that I can find no words to probe the depth of the wound

that eats into the administrative body of our State like a cancer, without looking for my style in *Figaro* or *Polichinel*?

Style . . . yes! Before me lie documents in which there is style! Style which showed that there was, close at hand, a *man* in the true sense, a *man* to whom it would have been worth while to put out a helping hand! And what has that style availed poor Havelaar? *He* did not translate his tears into a grin, *he* jeered not, *he* did not seek to strike home by garish variety of colours, or by the jests of the crier in front of the booth at the fair . . . what has it availed him?

If I could write as he, I should write otherwise than he.

Style? Did you not hear how he spoke to the Chiefs? What has it availed him?

If I could speak as he, I should speak otherwise than he.

Away with kindly language, away with gentleness, frankness, simplicity, feeling! Away with all that savours of Horatius's *justum ac tenacem*! Sound trumpets here, and the loud clatter of cymbals, and the sharp hiss of rockets, and the scraping of untuned strings, and now and then a word of truth, so that it may steal in like a forbidden article, under cover of so many drumming and piping sounds!

Style? *He* had style! He had too much soul to drown his thoughts in the "I have the honours" and the "noble-severities" and the "respectfully submitted for considerations," which are the voluptuous joy of the little world in which he moved. When he wrote, something went through you who read it which made you realize that clouds accompanied the thunderstorm, and that it was not merely the rumble of a sheet-iron stage-thunder you heard. When he struck fire from his thought-conceptions, you felt the heat of that fire, unless you were a born office-man, or a Governor-General, or the writer of the most loathly Report on "peaceful peace." And what has it availed him?

So if I wish to be heard — and above all understood! — I must write otherwise than he. But then, *how*?

Reader, I am in search of the answer to that *how*, and that is why my book has such a motley appearance. It is a pattern-card: make your choice! Afterwards I will give you yellow or blue or red according to your taste.

Havelaar had already noticed the Governor-disease in so many patients — and often *in anima vili*, for there are analogous Resident-Controller- and Supernumerary-diseases, standing to the former in the same relation as measles to smallpox; and, finally, he himself had suffered from this class of disease! — already so frequently had he noticed all this that the accompanying symptoms were pretty well known to him. He had found the then Governor-General less dizzy in the first stages of the indisposition than most of the others, and thought he might conclude from this that the further course of the illness would probably also take another direction.

It was for this reason that he feared to be the stronger when in the end he would have to stand up as defender of the rights of the inhabitants of *Lebak*.



CHAPTER XVI

HAVELAAR received a letter from the Regent of *Tjanjor*, telling him that he wished to pay a visit to his uncle the *Adhipatti* of *Lebak*. This was very unwelcome to him. He knew how the Chiefs in the *Preanger Regencies* were accustomed to display great luxury, and how the *Tommongong* of *Tjanjor* would not make such a journey without a retinue of hundreds of people who, with their horses, would all have to be housed and fed. He would therefore have gladly prevented this visit, but ponder as he would, he could not think of any means to stop it without hurting the feelings of the Regent of *Rangkas-Betoong*, who was very proud and would have felt deeply offended if his relative poverty had been adduced as a motive for not receiving the visit. And if that visit could *not* be avoided, it would infallibly lead to aggravation of the pressure that already weighed so heavily on the people.

It must be doubted whether Havelaar's address had made a lasting impression on the Chiefs. With many this certainly was not the case, and he himself, indeed, had not expected it. But just as certain it was that in the villages a rumour had gone round that the *toowan*¹ who held authority at *Rangkas-Betoong* wished to do justice, and so, even if his words had missed the power to stop crime, they had undoubtedly given the victims of it the courage to complain, although this was only done timidly and secretly.

At eve they would crawl along the ravine, and when Tine was sitting in her room she was often startled by unexpected sounds, and through the open window she would see dark figures stealing past with timorous steps. Soon she no longer felt startled, for she knew what it meant when those figures wandered spectre-like

¹ Lord, master.

about the house to seek the protection of her Max! Then she would beckon him, and he would rise to call the complainants before him. Most of them were from the district of *Parang-Kood-yang*, where the Regent's son-in-law was paramount Chief, and though that Chief doubtless did not neglect to take his portion of the extortions, yet it was known to all and sundry that he nearly always robbed in the name and on behalf of the Regent. It was touching to see how all those poor people trusted in Havelaar's chivalry, and were convinced that he would not call them the next day to repeat publicly what the previous night or evening they had said in his room. For this, of course, would have meant ill-treatment for all of them, and death for many! Havelaar noted down what they had told him, and then ordered the complainants to go back to their villages. He promised that justice would be done, provided they did not rebel, or, as most of them intended, leave the district. Most often he was shortly afterwards at the place where the wrongs had been committed; indeed, frequently he had already been there and investigated the complaint, usually during the night, before even the complainant himself had been able to return to his home. In this way he visited, throughout this extensive division, villages at a twenty hours' journey from *Rangkas-Betoong*, without either the Regent or even Controller Verbrugge knowing that he was absent from the head-centre. It was his intention in this manner to avert the danger of revenge that threatened the complainants, and at the same time to save the Regent the ignominy of a public inquiry, which, under the present Assistant-Resident, would certainly not, as before, have ended in a retraction of the complaint. So he still hoped that the Chiefs might turn from the dangerous road they had trodden so long, and in that case he would have contented himself with demanding indemnities for the victims of robbery . . . in so far as it was possible to make good the losses sustained.

But every time after again speaking to the Regent, he became more convinced that the promises of amendment were idle, and he was greatly distressed at the failure of his efforts.

We will now leave him for a while to this distress and to his difficult labour, in order to tell the reader the story of the Javanese *Saïdyah* in the *dessah*¹ of *Badoor*. I choose the name of this Javanese and of the village from Havelaar's notes. In this story there will be question of extortion and robbery, and if, as regards the main tendency, anyone wishes to deny to a fiction the force of evidence, I give the assurance that I can supply the names of *thirty-two persons* in the district of *Parang Koodyang* alone, from whom in one month *thirty-six buffaloes* were forcibly taken on behalf of the Regent. Or, to be even more exact, that I can name thirty-two persons from that district who in one month *had the courage to complain*, and whose complaints Havelaar *inquired into and found justified*.

There are *five* such districts in the division of *Lebak*.

Now if anyone chooses to accept that the number of stolen buffaloes was less high in the places that had not the honour of being ruled by a son-in-law of the *Adhipatti*, I shall not insist on disputing the point, although the question is whether the insolence of other Chiefs may not have been based on grounds as solid as exalted kinship. For instance, the District-Chief of *Tjelang-kahan*, on the south coast, could, in the absence of a feared father-in-law, depend on the difficulty of lodging complaints which confronted poor people who had to travel from *forty* to *sixty* miles before at eve they could hide in the ravine next to Havelaar's house. And if then also one remembers the many who started on the way and never reached that house . . . and the many who never even left their village, frightened by their own past experience or by the contemplation of the fate that befell other complainants, then I believe that one would be wrong in imagining that to multiply the number of stolen buffaloes in one district by *five* would yield too high a statistical measure of the total number of buffaloes stolen every month in the combined *five* districts in order to provide for the needs of the Court and dependants of the Regent of *Lebak*.

And it was not only buffaloes that were stolen, nor even was

¹ Village.

buffalo-theft the principal thing. There is, especially in India, where *master-service* still exists legally, a lesser amount of insolence required for unlawfully calling up the population to do unpaid labour than for stealing property. It is easier to make the people believe that the Government requires their labour without wishing to pay for it than that it would demand their buffaloes for nothing. And even if the timid Javanese *dared* inquire whether the so-called *master-service* which is exacted from him is in accordance with the instructions governing this institution, it would be impossible for him to get information that was of any use, as he could not obtain particulars with regard to the separate units of the population, and could not therefore calculate whether the prescribed numbers of persons had been ten or fifty times exceeded. If then the more dangerous and more readily detected buffalo-theft is carried out with such effrontery, what may one expect as regards the abuses that are more easily practised and less liable to detection?

I said that I should proceed to the story of the Javanese *Said-yah*. First, however, I am obliged to make one of the digressions so difficult to avoid when describing conditions to which the reader is an entire stranger. And at the same time this will give me occasion to point to one of many obstacles that render it so very difficult for a non-Indian to form a correct opinion of Indian affairs.

I have repeatedly spoken of Javanese, and however natural this may appear to the European reader, yet to those at home in *Java* this name will have sounded wrong. The western residencies of *Bantam*, *Batavia*, *Preanger*, *Krawang*, and part of *Cheribon*, which are jointly called *Soondahlands*, are considered as not belonging to *Java* proper, and, leaving out of consideration that portion of the population of these regions which consists of strangers come from oversea, the original inhabitants themselves are indeed an entirely different race from the people in Middle-*Java* and the so-called eastern corner. Dress, national characteristics and language differ so entirely from those of the eastward that the *Soon-*

danese or *Orang Goonoong*¹ stands farther removed from the real Javanese than an Englishman from a Dutchman. Such differences often lead to lack of unanimity in judging of Indian affairs. For when Java alone is already so sharply divided into two dissimilar parts, without counting the many subdivisions of the main groups, one may get some idea of the wide distinction between tribes that live farther apart and are divided by the sea. He that only knows Netherlands India as *Java* can no more have a conception of the *Malay*, the *Amboinese*, the *Battah*, the *Alfoor*, the *Timorese*, the *Dayak*, the *Booghie*, or the *Macassar* than if he had never left Europe; and to anyone who has had opportunities of observing the differences between these races it is often amusing to hear the conversations, comical and disheartening at the same time to read the speeches, of persons who obtained their knowledge of Indian affairs at *Batavia* or *Buitenzorg*. Often have I been amazed at the courage with which, for instance, an ex-Governor-General in Parliament tried to give importance to his words by a pretended claim to local knowledge and experience. I attach a high value to science obtained by serious study in the library, and I have more than once been astonished at the extensive knowledge of Indian affairs exhibited by some people who never set foot on Indian soil. As soon as an ex-Governor-General gives evidence of having acquired such knowledge in *that* manner, we owe him the respect due to long, conscientious, and productive labour. We owe him greater respect even than to the student who has had to conquer fewer difficulties because, at a great distance *without* immediate contact, he has run less risk of falling into the errors that result from a *defective* contact such as must inevitably have come to an ex-Governor-General.

I said I was amazed at the courage displayed by some persons during the discussions of Indian affairs. For they know that their words are heard by others besides those who imagine that a couple of years spent at *Buitenzorg* are a sufficient qualification to know India. It must be known to them that those words are also read by

¹ Man from the Mountains.

persons who in India were witnesses to their incapacity, and who, like myself, are astounded at the temerity of a man who, quite recently engaged in the vain endeavour to cover up his inexperience under the high rank conferred on him by the King, now suddenly makes bold to speak as if he really had a knowledge of the affairs he discusses.

And indeed almost daily we hear complaints about incompetent interference. Almost every day this or that view of colonial policy is combated by denial of the competence of him who represents that view, and perhaps it would be worth while to institute a thorough inquiry as to the qualities that render a person competent to . . . judge competence. Most often an important question is tested, not by the subject it deals with, but by the value attached to the opinions of the man who speaks to it, and as this is most often the person who is accepted as a *Specialist*, and for choice "one who in India held such an important position," it follows that the result of a vote usually has the colour of the errors that seem inevitably to belong to that "important position." If this is already the case where the influence of such a specialist is but exercised by a member of Parliament, how much greater then must be the predisposition to warped judgment when such influence is coupled with the confidence of the King, who allowed himself to be coerced into placing such a specialist at the head of his Colonial Department.

It is a remarkable phenomenon, perhaps springing from a kind of inertia which fears to judge for itself, that people give their confidence with the greatest light-heartedness to persons who know how to create the impression of being possessed of superior knowledge, whenever such knowledge can *only* be drawn from sources not accessible to everyone. The cause may be that human self-esteem is less offended at having to acknowledge such superiority than in a case where one might have used the same resources, and where rivalry might therefore come into play. The representative of the people experiences no difficulty in relinquishing his opinion

when it is combated by someone who may be considered to pass a better informed judgment than his, so long as such supposed better informed judgment cannot be ascribed to personal superiority — the acknowledgment of which would be harder — but to nothing more than the special circumstances of which such an opponent has had the advantage.

And apart from those “who filled such *high positions*” in India, it is indeed strange how often people attribute value to the opinions of persons who possess nothing to justify such attribution except the “memory of so many years spent in those lands.” This is the more peculiar, since the same people who attach value to that class of argument would probably be the last to accept anything they were told, say, about Dutch political economy on the strength of a forty or fifty years’ residence in Holland. There are persons who spent nearly as many years in Netherlands India without ever having come in contact either with the population or with the native Chiefs, and it is pitiful to reflect that the Council of India is often entirely or largely composed of such persons, indeed that means have been found to persuade the King to sign the appointments as Governor-General of men belonging to *this* kind of specialists.

When I said that the supposed ability of a newly appointed Governor-General should be considered as including the opinion that he was taken to be a genius, it was in no way my intention to recommend the appointment of geniuses. For in addition to the objection that one would be repeatedly compelled to leave so important a position unfilled, there is another plea against such a proposal. A genius could not work under the Colonial Department, and would therefore be unemployable for the purpose . . . as geniuses are apt to be in so many cases.

It might perhaps not be undesirable that the principal defects enumerated by me in the form of a diagnosis should draw the attention of those who are called to choose successive new Governors-General. Giving first prominence to the requirement that

all persons who are to receive consideration for the position should be right-minded and possessed of a comprehensive faculty enabling them to some extent to learn what they will have to know, I next consider it indispensable that we should, with some degree of confidence, be able to expect from them the avoidance of presumptuous pedantry at the outset, and particularly of the apathetic sleepiness that so often accompanies the concluding years of their administration. I have already referred to the fact that Havelaar, in his difficult duty, hoped to be able to rely on the support of the Governor-General, and I added that this hope was naïve. That Governor-General was already expecting his successor: his peaceful retirement to Holland was at hand!

We shall see what consequences this tendency to sleepiness brought to the division of *Lebak*, to Havelaar, and to the Javanese *Säidyah*, whose monotonous story, one of many! I shall presently relate.

Yes, monotonous it will be! Monotonous as the account of the drudgery of the ant that has to drag its contribution to the winter store to the top of a lump of earth, a mountain to the little insect, which lies on the way to the storehouse. Time upon time it falls back with its load, and every time tries again whether at last it can solidly plant its feet on the small stone up there . . . on the rock that crowns the mountain. But between it and that summit there is a precipice that has to be negotiated . . . a depth which not a thousand ants would fill. For this purpose the tiny creature, with scarcely the strength to drag along its load on level ground, a load many times heavier than its own body, has to raise that load above its head, and keep itself upright on a movable spot. It must keep its balance when rising upright with its load between its forefeet. It must swing the load upward slantwise, in order to allow it to come down on the point that juts out from the wall of the rock. It totters, staggers, starts, succumbs . . . tries to uphold itself by the half-uprooted tree whose crown points to the depth — a grass-blade! — it misses the footing it seeks: the tree swings back

— the grass-blade gives way under its tread — alas! the drudge falls down the precipice with its load. Then it is still for a moment, quite a second . . . which is long in the life of an ant. Is it stunned by the pain of its fall? Or does it yield to some sorrow that so much exertion was vain? But it has not lost courage. Again it takes up the load, and again drags it upward, presently to fall once more, and still once more, down the precipice.

So monotonous is my story. But I shall not this time speak of ants, whose joy or sorrow, owing to the clumsiness of our senses, escapes our observation. I shall speak of human beings, of creatures who live and move like ourselves. It is true, those who shun emotion and wish to avoid the fatigue of pity, will say that those people are yellow, or brown — many call them black — and for such as those the difference of colour is a sufficient reason to turn their eyes away from such misery, or, if they do not cast a glance at it, to look down on it without emotion.

My story therefore is exclusively addressed to those who are capable of the difficult belief that hearts beat beneath that dark outer skin, and that he who is blessed with the possession of a white complexion and with the civilization, generosity, knowledge of business and of God, and virtue that inevitably go together with it . . . that he might apply his "white" qualities in another manner than has so far been experienced by those less blessed in complexion and soul-eminence.

My hope, however, of sympathy with the Javanese does not go so far as to make me expect that the description of the theft, in full daylight, of the last buffalo from the *kendang*,¹ theft without scruple, under protection of Dutch authority . . . the description of the owner and his weeping children following the animal as it is driven off . . . of that owner sitting down on the steps of the robber's house, speechless and stunned and lost in sorrow . . . the description of him driven thence with insult and scorn, with the threat of *rattan*-strokes and the log-prison . . . ah, I do not de-

¹ Enclosure.

mand, nor expect, my fellow-Dutchmen! — that such description will move you in like measure as it would if I sketched for you a Dutch peasant whose cow was taken from him. I ask for no tear to flow with the tears on such dark faces, no noble indignation when I shall speak of the despair of the robbed ones. Also I do not expect that you shall rise and go to the King with my book in your hand, and say: “See, O King, this is what happens in *your* Empire, in your beautiful Empire of Insulind!”

No, no, no, all this I do not expect! Too much suffering near you absorbs all your sympathy, for so much feeling to be left you for what is so far away! Are not all your nerves kept in extreme tension by the distressful task of choosing a new Member of Parliament? Is not your torn soul tossed between the world-renowned merits of Nonentity *A* and Nincompoop *B*? And do you not require your precious tears for more serious matters than . . . but what more need I say? Was not the Exchange depressed yesterday, and is not at this very moment a somewhat excessive supply threatening the coffee-market with a slump?

“For goodness’ sake don’t write such senseless things to your papa, Stern!” I said, and perhaps I said it a bit hotly, for I can’t bear untruth: that has always been a fixed principle with me. That evening I wrote at once to old Stern to make haste with his orders, and particularly to be on his guard against false rumours, for coffee-quotes are high.

The reader will realize what I have again had to bear in listening to the last chapters. I found in the children’s playroom a game of solitaire, which in future I shall take with me to the party. Wasn’t I right when I said that this Shawlman had made them all silly with his bundle? Can one, in all this scribbling of Stern’s — and Frits takes a hand also, that is quite certain! — recognize young people who are brought up in a genteel house? What are those stupid sallies against a disease that shows itself in longing for

a country villa? Is that a hit at me? Am I not allowed to go to Driebergen, when Frits is a broker? And who ever talks of stomach-complaints in the presence of women and girls? It is a fixed principle with me always to remain calm — for I consider this useful in business — but I must admit that I often found it very difficult lately when hearing all the nonsense Stern reads out. What does he want? What will be the end of it? When will there at last be something solid? What do I care whether this fellow Havelaar keeps his garden tidy, and whether the people come into his house at the back or the front? At Busselinck & Waterman's people go in through a narrow passage, next to an oil-warehouse, where it is always frightfully dirty. And then all that bother about those buffaloes! Why do they want buffaloes, those Blacks? I have never had a buffalo, and yet I live contented. There are people who are always complaining. And as to that throwing off at forced labour, it is easily seen that he has not heard the Reverend Twaddler's sermon, otherwise he would know how useful that labour is for the spread of God's Kingdom. But, of course, he is a Lutheran.

This is certain, if I could have guessed *how* he would write the book which is to be of such importance to all coffee-brokers — and others — I'd sooner have done it myself. But he gets support from the Rosemeyers, who are in sugar, and that's what makes him so bold. I said straight out — for I am candid in things of this kind — that we could do perfectly well without the story of that *Säid-yah*, but then Louise Rosemeyer all at once set herself against me. It appears that Stern had told her that there would be something about love in it, and those girls are mad on that. However, that would not have put me off, only the Rosemeyers had told me they would like to get to know Stern's father. The idea is, of course, to get through the father at the uncle, who is in sugar. Now if I stand up too strongly for good sense against young Stern, I may create an impression that I want to draw them away from him, and that is in no way the case, for they are in sugar.

I don't in the least understand Stern's object with his scribbling. There are always discontented people, and surely it is not nice of him, when he enjoys so many benefits in Holland — only this week my wife made him some camomile-tea — to abuse the Government! Does he wish in that way to stimulate the general discontent? Does *he* want to become Governor-General? He is conceited enough for that . . . I mean to want to. I asked him this the day before yesterday, and told him candidly that his Dutch was still so very deficient! "Oh, that is no difficulty," he answered. "It appears to be the exception that a Governor-General is sent out there who understands the language of the country." What on earth can I do with such a wiseacre? He has not the slightest respect for my experience. When I told him this week that I had been a broker these seventeen years, and had been on 'Change for twenty years, he quoted Busselinck & Waterman, who have been brokers for eighteen years, and, he said, "they therefore have one year more experience." And there he had me, for I have to admit, as I am wedded to the truth, that Busselinck & Waterman know little about the business, and that they are tricksters.

Marie is also getting wrong-headed. Just fancy, this week — it was her turn to read aloud at breakfast, and we had got to the story of Lot — she suddenly stopped and refused to read on. My wife, who is just as keen on religion as I, tried with gentleness to persuade her to be obedient, as of course it is not proper for a modest girl to be so self-willed. All in vain! Then I, as her father, had to scold her with great severity, as her obstinacy disturbed the edification of breakfast, a thing which always reacts badly on the whole day. But nothing was any use, and she went so far as to say that she would rather be struck dead than read on. I punished her with three days' detention in her room with nothing but coffee and bread, and I trust it will do her good. In order that the punishment might at the same time tend to her moral improvement, I ordered her to copy out the chapter she would not read, ten times, and that I proceeded to such severity was more particularly be-

cause I have noticed that latterly — I don't know whether this comes from Stern — she has taken ideas into her head that appear to me dangerous to morality, on which my wife and I are so specially keen. Amongst other things I have heard her sing a French song — by *Béranger*, I believe — in which a poor old beggar-woman who in her youth sang on the stage is pitied; and yesterday she came to breakfast without stays on — Marie, I mean — which surely is not respectable.

I also must admit that Frits has not brought home much good from the prayer-meeting. I was fairly satisfied with his quiet behaviour in sitting still in Church. He never stirred, never turned his eyes away from the pulpit; but I learnt afterwards that Betsy Rosemeyer was sitting in the chancel. I said nothing about it, for one must not be too severe with young people, and the Rosemeyers are a respectable firm. They gave their eldest daughter, when she married Bridgeman who is in drugs, a nice little bit, and I believe therefore that this kind of thing keeps Frits away from the Westermarket, which pleases me greatly, as I am so keen on morality.

But this does not prevent my being vexed at seeing Frits hardening his heart, like Pharaoh, who really was less guilty than he, as he had no father who was always showing him the right way, for the Scriptures say nothing about Pharaoh Senior. The Reverend Twaddler complains about his conceit — I mean Frits's conceit — at the confirmation class, and the boy seems to have dug up, out of that bundle of Shawlman's again! — an amount of wisdom that drives conscientious old Twaddler mad. It is quite touching how the worthy man, who often takes luncheon with us, tries to work on Frits's feelings, and how the young rascal has always fresh questions ready, showing the refractoriness of his heart . . . it all comes from that accursed bundle of Shawlman's! With tears of feeling rolling down his cheeks, the zealous servant of the Evangelists seeks to persuade him to renounce man-made wisdom, and to be introduced to the mysteries of God's wisdom. With gentle and tender language he beseeches him not to reject the bread of

eternal life, and so to fall into the clutches of Satan, who dwells with his angels in the fire which has been prepared for him unto all eternity. "Oh!" he said yesterday — I mean Twaddler — "oh, my young friend, do open your eyes and your ears, and hear and see what the Lord gives you to see and to hear from my lips. Mark the testimony of the Saints who died for the true faith! Observe Saint Stephen, as he sinks under the cobblestones that crush him! See how his eye still seeks heaven, and how his tongue still sings psalms. . ."

"I'd rather have thrown some back at them!" Frits said. Reader, what am I to do with that boy?

A moment after Twaddler started again, for he is a zealous servant, and does not desist from his labours. "Oh!" he said, "my young friend, do open . . ." the introduction was the same as before. "But," he continued, "can you remain insensible to the reflection of what must become of you if once you are counted among the goats on the left side . . ."

Here the rascal burst out into loud laughter — I mean Frits — and Marie also began to laugh. I even thought I traced something like a laugh on my wife's face. But now I thought it time to support Twaddler, and I punished Frits with a fine from his money-box to be paid to the Mission Society.

Alas, reader, all this moves me deeply. And how can I, suffering these pangs, amuse myself listening to stories about buffaloes and Javanese? What is a buffalo compared with the salvation of Frits? What concern of mine are the affairs of those far-off people, when I fear that Frits by his unbelief will ruin my own affairs, and that he will never be a solid broker? For Twaddler himself has said that God ordains everything in such manner that orthodoxy leads to wealth. "Just see," he said, "is there not much wealth in Holland? That is the result of faith. Is there not in France continually murder and manslaughter? That is because there they are Catholics. Are not the Javanese poor? They are heathens. The longer the Dutch are connected with the Javanese, the more wealth

will there be here, and the more poverty yonder. It's God's will that it should be so!"

I am amazed at Twaddler's insight into business. For it is the truth that I, who am strict in religion, see my business more prosperous every year, whilst Busselinck & Waterman, who trouble neither about God nor his commandments, will only remain tricksters all their lives. The Rosemeyers also, who are in sugar and have a Catholic maid-servant, had again recently to accept five shillings in the pound from a Jew who had gone bankrupt. The more I think of it, the more I am able to discover the inscrutable ways of God. Recently again it was found that thirty million guilders clear profit was made from the sale of products supplied by the heathen, and that did not even include what I made out of it and the many others who make a living by this business. Doesn't it seem as if the Lord said: "Here are thirty millions for your belief"? Isn't this clearly the hand of God, who makes the wicked man labour to save the just? Isn't this a hint to continue in the right way? A hint to have much produced over there, and to persist here in the true faith? Isn't it therefore said: "Pray and work," so that *we* should pray, and have the work done by all the black rabble that knows nothing of "Our Father"?

Oh! how right is Twaddler when he calls God's yoke light! How light is the burden made for all those who believe! I am only in the forties, and could retire if I wished to, and go to Driebergen; and just see what others come to who forsake the Lord! Yesterday I saw Shawlman with his wife and little boy: they looked like ghosts. He is as pale as death, his eyes stick out, and his cheeks are hollow. His figure stoops, although he is even younger than I. She also was very shabbily dressed, and she seemed to have been crying again. Well, of course, I had at once noticed that she had a discontented nature, for I have only to see a person once to take his measure. That is the result of experience. She wore a short thin mantle of black silk, although it was pretty cold. Not a sign of a crinoline. Her light skirt hung slack around her knees, and

at the edge there was a fringe. He didn't even have his shawl now, and looked as if we were in mid-summer. And yet he still seems to possess a kind of pride, for he gave something to a poor woman who was sitting on the *lock* — Frits says *bridge*; but when the thing is stone without a wooden span, I call it a *lock*¹ — and anyone who has so little himself, and then still gives to another, commits a sin. Besides, I never give in the street, this is one of my principles; for I always say, when I see those poor people: Who knows but that it may be their own fault, and I should do wrong to encourage them in their perversity? On Sundays I give twice: once for the poor and once for the Church. That's as it ought to be! I don't know whether Shawlman saw me, but I went on quickly, and looked upward, and thought of the justice of God, who of course would not let him go about like this without a winter coat if he had behaved better and was not lazy, pedantic, and sickly.

Now as to my book, I really owe the reader an apology for the unpardonable manner in which Stern abuses our contract. I must admit that I look forward with a heavy heart to the next party and the love-story of that *Saïdyah*. The reader knows already what healthy ideas I have about love . . . you may remember my opinion about that excursion to the Ganges. That young girls find that kind of thing interesting, I can quite well understand; but to me it is inexplicable that men of a certain age can listen to such tomfoolery without disgust. I feel certain that during the next meeting I shall find the triolet of my solitaire-game.

I shall try to hear nothing about that *Saïdyah*, and I hope the man will soon get married, at least if *he* is the hero of the love-story. It is rather kind of Stern to have warned me in advance that it will be a monotonous story. As soon as he starts with something else I shall listen again. But all this condemnation of the Government bores me almost as much as love-stories. One can see in everything that Stern is young and has little experience. If one wishes to examine things properly, one has to see them at close

¹ An old Amsterdam confusion of terms.

quarters. When I was married, I was at The Hague myself, and visited the Maurits-house¹ with my wife. I was in touch there with every rank of Society, for I saw the State Treasurer driving by, and we bought flannel together in the Veene-street — I and my wife, I mean — and I did not anywhere see the least sign of dissatisfaction with the Government. The lady in the shop looked thriving and contented, and so when in 1848 some people tried to make us believe that at The Hague things were not all as they should be, I spoke my opinion about this dissatisfaction quite frankly at our party. I was given credit for knowing, for everyone was aware that I spoke from experience. And on the journey back the conductor on the stage-coach played on his horn the old song "Live gladly," and surely the man would not have done this if there had been so much to complain of. In this way I took notice of everything, and therefore knew at once what to think of all this grousing in 1848.

Opposite us lives a woman whose nephew has a *toko* in the East: that's what they call a shop over there. Now if everything was going as badly as Stern makes out, surely she would know something about it, and yet it appears that the woman is quite satisfied with business, for I never hear her complain. On the contrary, she says her nephew lives in a country villa there, and he is a member of the vestry, and he has sent her a peacock-feather cigar-case, which he made himself out of bamboo. All this, I should think, shows plainly how unfounded are all those complaints about bad Government. One may also see from it that anyone who will look after things may earn a good deal in that country, and that therefore this Shawlman even there was lazy, pedantic, and sickly, else he would not have returned so poor, and be now walking about here without a winter coat. And the nephew of that woman opposite is not the only one who has made a fortune in the East. In "Poland"² I see a good many men who have been

¹ Then a museum.

² A café at Amsterdam.

there, and who are very well dressed indeed. But one thing is self-evident: one must look after things over there just as much as here. In Java also no roast pigeons will fly into a man's mouth: one must work! He that does not wish to do this is poor and remains poor, that is obvious, and a good thing too.



CHAPTER XVII

SAÏDYAH's father had a buffalo with which he worked his field. After this buffalo had been taken from him by the District-Head of Parang-Koodyang, he was full of sadness, and never spoke a word for many days. For ploughing-time was drawing near, and it was to be feared that if the rice-field was not prepared early, seeding-time also would pass by, and in the end there would be no paddy to cut and store in the shed of the house.

I must here remark, for readers who know Java but do not know Bantam, that in this residency personal landownership exists, which is not the case elsewhere. Saïdyah's father then was greatly distressed. He feared that his wife would lack rice, and also Saïdyah, who was still a child, and the younger brothers and sisters of Saïdyah.

Also the District-Head would doubtless cite him before the Assistant-Resident if he were behindhand in paying his land-rent, for there is a penalty for this.

Then Saïdyah's father took a dagger which was an heirloom from *his* father. The dagger was not very beautiful, but there were silver bands round the sheath, and also on the point of the sheath a small silver plate. He sold this dagger to a Chinaman who lived in the chief township, and came home with twenty-four guilders, which is two pounds of English money, for which sum he bought another buffalo.

Saïdyah, who was then about seven years old, soon contracted a friendship with the new buffalo. Not inadvisedly do I say "friendship," for it is indeed touching to see how the Javanese buffalo becomes attached to the little boy that watches and takes care of him. The strong animal willingly bows his heavy head to right or

left or downward, according to the finger-pressure of the child that he knows, that he understands, that he has grown up with.

And such friendship little Saïdyah rapidly inspired in the new guest, whilst the encouragement of Saïdyah's child-voice seemed to give greater strength even to the powerful shoulders of the strong animal, when it tore up the heavy clay of the soil and marked its passage in deep, sharp furrows. The buffalo turned round docilely when he reached the end of the paddock, and lost not an inch-breadth of the ground in his backward course ploughing the new furrow, which ever lay alongside the old one as though the rice-field were a garden-plot raked by a giant.

Next to this field lay those of Adinda's father, the father of the child that was to marry Saïdyah. And when Adinda's little brothers came to the border that lay between, at exactly the same moment as Saïdyah was also there with his plough, they called out to each other merrily, and in friendly rivalry praised the strength and obedience of their respective buffaloes. But I believe that of Saïdyah was the best, perhaps because he knew better than the others how to speak to it, for buffaloes are very sensitive to a friendly way of speaking.

Saïdyah was nine, and Adinda already six, before this buffalo was taken from Saïdyah's father by the District-Chief of Parang Koodyang.

Saïdyah's father, who was very poor, now sold to a Chinaman two silver curtain-clasps, heirlooms from the parents of his wife, for eighteen guilders. And for this money he bought a new buffalo.

But Saïdyah was heavy-hearted, for he knew from Adinda's little brothers that the last buffalo had been driven to the head-centre, and he had asked his father whether he had not seen the animal when he was there to sell the curtain-clasps. To which question Saïdyah's father had not wished to reply. Therefore he feared that his buffalo had been killed, as was the case with the other buffaloes which the District-Chief took from the people.

And Saïdyah cried much when he thought of the poor buffalo

with which for two years he had been so closely associated. And for a long time he could not eat, for his throat tightened when he tried to swallow.

One must remember that Saïdyah was a child.

The new buffalo got to know Saïdyah, and very soon won in the affection of the child the place of its predecessor . . . too soon, really. For, alas, the impressions of our heart, impressions as in wax, are so easily smoothed out, to make room for other writing! However, though the new buffalo was not so strong as the former one . . . though the old yoke was too wide for its shoulders . . . yet the poor animal was as docile as its predecessor which had been killed, and if Saïdyah could no longer boast of the strength of his buffalo when meeting Adinda's little brothers on the boundary-line, he maintained that no other exceeded his in obedience; and if the furrow did not run as straight as before, or if lumps of earth were passed unbroken, he gladly remedied this deficiency with his spade as far as he could. Besides, no buffalo had a hair-twist like his. The priest himself had said that there was luck in the course of the hairy vertebræ at the back of the shoulders.

One day, in the field, Saïdyah called out in vain to his buffalo to speed up more. The animal stopped dead. Saïdyah, annoyed at an obstinacy so great and especially so unaccustomed, could not refrain from uttering an insult. He exclaimed a. s. Anyone that has been in Java will understand me, and those who do not understand can only gain by my sparing them the explanation of a coarse expression.

Saïdyah, however, meant nothing evil. He only said it because he had so often heard it from others when they were dissatisfied with their buffaloes. But he need not have said it, for it was of no avail; his buffalo took not another step forward. He shook his head as if to throw off the yoke . . . one saw the breath coming from his nostrils . . . he stood panting, he trembled, he quivered . . . there was fear in his blue eye, and his upper lip was drawn back until the gums lay bare. . . .

"Run, run!" suddenly cried Adinda's brothers. "Saïdyah, run! there is a tiger."

And all undid the ploughing-yokes from their buffaloes, throwing themselves on the broad backs, and galloping away through rice-fields, across dykes, through mud, through scrub and bush and prairie-grass, by fields and roads. And when they rode panting and sweating into the village of Badoor, Saïdyah was not with them.

For when he, having freed his buffalo from the yoke, had mounted, like the others, to flee as they, an unexpected bound of the animal had made him lose his balance and thrown him to the ground. The tiger was very near. . . .

Saïdyah's buffalo, driven forward by its own speed, rushed a few leaps past the spot where his little master awaited death. But only through its own speed, and not through its own will, had it gone past Saïdyah. For scarcely had it overcome the force that controls all matter, when it turned back, planted its clumsy body on its clumsy feet above the child like a roof, and turned its horned head to the tiger. The brute sprang . . . but it sprang for the last time. The buffalo caught it on his horns and only lost some flesh that the tiger tore out at the neck. The assailant lay on the ground with ripped-up belly . . . Saïdyah was saved. It was quite true that there had been luck in the hair-twist of that buffalo!

When this buffalo had been taken from Saïdyah's father and killed . . .

I have told you, reader, that my story is monotonous.

. . . when this buffalo was killed, Saïdyah was twelve years old, and Adinda wove shawls and painted them with a pointed head-piece. She had already *thoughts* to work into the course of her paint-shuttle, and she painted sadness on the texture of her fabric, for she had seen Saïdyah very sad.

And Saïdyah's father also was deeply grieved, but his mother most of all. For it was she who had healed the wound in the neck of the faithful animal that had brought home her child unhurt,

when, after hearing the news told by Adinda's little brothers, she had thought that Saïdyah had been carried off by the tiger. So often had she looked at that wound, thinking how deep the claw that entered so far into the tough thews of the buffalo would have been driven into the soft body of her child; and every time after she had laid fresh healing herbs on the wound, she had caressed the buffalo, and spoken some kindly words to it, so that the good and faithful animal might know how grateful a mother is! She now hoped with all her heart that the buffalo might have understood her, for then it would also have known the meaning of her tears when it was taken away to be killed, and it would have known that it was not Saïdyah's mother who had ordered it to be killed.

Some time after this, Saïdyah's father fled the country. For he greatly feared the punishment if he were not able to pay his land-rent, and he had no more heirlooms to buy a new buffalo with, as his parents had always lived in Parang Koodyang, and had therefore left him but little. And also the parents of his wife had always lived in the same district. After the loss of his last buffalo he had still kept going a few years by working with hired plough-beasts. But that is a very thankless form of labour, and especially galling to one who has been in possession of his own buffaloes. Saïdyah's mother had died of grief; and then his father, in a despondent moment, ran away from Lebak and from Bantam, to look for work about Buitenzorg. He was flogged with the rattan cane for having left Lebak without a pass, and taken back by the police to Badoor. There he was thrown into the gaol because they took him to be mad, which would not have been altogether inexplicable, and because they feared that in a moment of half-madness he might run amuck or be guilty of some other misdeed. But he was not long in prison, for shortly after he died.

I do not know what became of the little brothers and sisters of Saïdyah. The little house where they had lived at Badoor was empty for awhile, and ere long it fell to pieces, as it was only built of bamboo and covered with palm-leaf. A little dust and dirt

covered the spot where there had been much suffering. There are many such spots in Lebak.

Saïdyah was already fifteen when his father left Buitenzorg. He did not accompany him thither, because he carried greater projects in his mind. He had been told that in Batavia there were so many gentlemen who drove in bendies, a kind of tilbury, that he might find a place there as a bendie-boy, for which someone is usually chosen who is still young and not full-grown, so that he may not upset the balance of the two-wheeler by bearing with too much weight on the back. There was, he had been assured, with good conduct, much to be earned in such service. Perhaps in this manner he might even, within three years' time, save enough money to buy two buffaloes. This prospect lured him. With proud step, as one who has big business in mind, he entered Adinda's house after his father's departure, and informed her of his plan.

"Just think," he said, "when I return we shall be old enough to get married, and we shall have two buffaloes!"

"Very well, Saïdyah! I shall be glad to be married to you when you return. I shall spin, and weave shawls and skirts, and paint, and be very industrious all the time."

"Oh, I believe you, Adinda! But . . . if I should find you married?"

"Saïdyah, you know very well that I shall marry no one. My father promised me to your father."

"And you yourself?"

"I shall marry you, rest assured!"

"When I come back, I shall call from afar. . . ."

"Who will be able to hear that, when we are pounding rice in the village?"

"That is true. But, Adinda . . . Oh, yes, this is better: wait for me near the diati-wood, under the ketapan-tree, where you gave me the melatti-flower."

"But, Saïdyah, how shall I know when I am to go and wait for you near the ketapan?"

Saïdyah thought a moment and said: "Count the moons. I shall stay away thrice twelve moons . . . the present moon does not count. See, Adinda, cut a notch in your rice-block every new moon. When you shall have cut three times twelve notches, then the next following day I shall arrive under the ketapan. Promise that you will be there!"

"Yes, Saïdyah, I shall be under the ketapan near the diati-wood when you return."

Saïdyah then tore a strip from his blue head-kerchief, which was very much worn, and he gave the little piece of linen to Adinda, that she might keep it as a pledge. And so he left her and Badoor.

He walked on for many days. He passed Rangkas-Betoong, that was not yet the chief centre of Lebak, and Waroong-Goonoong where the Assistant-Resident then lived, and the next day he saw Pandyglang, that lies there as in a garden. Yet another day and he arrived at Serang, and stood amazed at the splendour of so large a place with many houses, built of stone and roofed with red tiles. Saïdyah had never seen anything like it. He stayed there one day because he was tired, but at night in the coolness he went on, and came to Tangerang the following day, before the shadow had descended to his lips, although he wore the large straw hat which his father had left behind for him.

At Tangerang he bathed in the river near the ferry, and then rested in the house of an acquaintance of his father's, who showed him how to plait straw hats, such as those that came from Manilla. He stayed there one day to learn this, for he thought it might afterwards enable him to earn money, in case he should not succeed in Batavia. The following day, towards nightfall, as it grew cool, he thanked his host very much, and travelled on. As soon as it was quite dark, so that no one should see it, he took out the leaf in which he kept the melatti Adinda had given him under the ketapan-trêe. For he had become heavy-hearted at the thought that he would not see her for so long a time. The first day, and also the second, he had felt less deeply how very much he was alone, for

his soul had been wholly preoccupied with the great idea of earning money to buy two buffaloes with, as his father had never had more than one, and his thoughts had been too strongly concentrated on the return-meeting with Adinda, leaving no room for very great sadness about their parting. He had bidden her farewell with over-exalted hopes, and his thoughts had connected that farewell with the ultimate reunion under the ketapan. For so great a part the prospect of that reunion played in his heart that, passing the tree on leaving Badoor, he felt almost joyful, as though they were already over, the six-and-thirty moons which divided him from that moment. It had seemed to him as if he had only to turn round as though returning from the voyage, to see Adinda waiting for him under the tree.

But the further he went away from Badoor, and the more he felt the terrible length of only one day, the more he began to think the thirty-six moons that lay before him a time of endless duration. There was something in his soul that made him stride along less quickly. He felt sadness in his knees, and though it was no despondency that overcame him, still it was melancholy, which is not far removed from despondency. He thought of turning back, but what would Adinda say to so little courage?

So he went on, although less rapidly than the first day. He held the melatti in his hand, and often pressed it against his breast. In these three days he had grown much older, and could not now understand how formerly he had been so calm, when yet Adinda was so close to him, and he could see her every time, and as long as he liked! For *now* he would not be calm if he could expect that presently she would stand before him. And also he did not understand how it was that after their parting he had not turned back once more to look at her just once again. Also he remembered how quite recently he had quarrelled with her about the cord she had spun for the kite of her little brothers, and which had broken because, so he held, there was a flaw in her weft, and this had lost them a bet with the children of Tjipooroot. "How had it been

possible," he thought, "to get angry with Adinda about this! For even if she *had* spun a flaw into the cord, and if the bet between Badoor and Tjipooroot had been lost through *this*, and not through the glass splinter so naughtily and dexterously thrown by little Djameen, who was hidden behind the hedge, should I even then have been right in behaving so harshly to her, and calling her unseemly names? How will it be if I die in Batavia without having asked her forgiveness for such great rudeness? Will it not be as though I were an evil person who flings bad names at a girl? And if people hear that I died in a strange land, will not everyone in Badoor say: 'It is a good thing that Saïdyah died, for he opened a wide mouth at Adinda'?"

So then his thoughts took a course which differed widely from the previous exaltation, and involuntarily they expressed themselves first in half-words scarce audible, but soon in a monologue, and at last in the sorrowful chant of which I here give the translation. At first it had been my intention to write it in metre and rhyme, but like Havelaar I judge it more fitting to omit that corset.

"I know not where I shall die.

I saw the great sea on the South Coast when I was there with my father to make salt;

If I die on the sea, and my body is thrown into the deep water, sharks will come.

They will swim round me, and ask 'Which of us shall devour the dead body that sinks yonder through the water?'

I shall not hear.

"I know not where I shall die.

I have seen the burning house of Pa-ansoo, that he himself had set afire because he was half-mad.

If I die in a burning house, the flaming timbers will fall on my body,

And outside the house there will be the hue and cry of people who throw water to quench the fire.

I shall not hear.

"I know not where I shall die.

I have seen little Si-oonah fall from the klappa-tree when he plucked a klappa for his mother.

If I fall from a klappa-tree, I shall lie dead at its foot in the brushwood, like Si-oonah.

My mother will not weep for me, for she is dead. But others will cry with harsh-sounding voice, 'Lo, there lies Saïdyah!'

I shall not hear.

"I know not where I shall die.

I have seen the dead body of Pa-lisoo, who had passed away in old age, for his hair was white.

If I die in old age, with white hair, the weeping-women will stand round my body.

And loudly they will lament as the mourners around Pa-lisoo's body, and the grandchildren also will cry with loud voices.

I shall not hear.

"I know not where I shall die.

I have seen many at Badoor who died. They were wrapped in a white garment and buried in the ground.

If I die at Badoor, and they bury me outside the village, eastward against the hill, where the grass is high,

Then will Adinda's footfall pass, and the hem of her garment will gently brush the grass in passing . . .

And I shall hear."

Saïdyah arrived in Batavia. He asked a gentleman to take him into his service, which this gentleman did immediately, as he did not understand Saïdyah. For in Batavia people like to have servants who have not yet learnt Malay, and who are therefore not yet so corrupted as others who have been longer in touch with European civilization. Saïdyah soon learned Malay, but he behaved in an exemplary manner, for he thought ever of the new buffaloes that he wished to buy, and of Adinda. He grew tall and strong, because he ate every day, which was not always possible at Badoor. He was liked in the stables and would certainly not have been rejected if he had asked for the coachman's daughter in marriage. His master also liked Saïdyah so much that he soon raised him to the position of house-servant. His wages were increased, and he was continually given presents, for the people were particularly well satisfied with his services. The mistress had read the novels

of Sue, whose brief renown was so sensational, and she always thought of Prince Djalma when she saw Saïdyah. The young ladies also understood better than before how it was that the Javanese artist, Radhen Saleh, had created such an impression in Paris.

But they thought Saïdyah ungrateful when, after nearly three years' service, he gave notice and asked for a certificate of good conduct. This, however, could not be refused, and Saïdyah set out for his native village with a happy heart.

He passed Pesing, where at one time Havelaar dwelt, long ago. But this Saïdyah did not know. And even if he had known, he carried in his soul other things altogether, that entirely occupied him. He counted the treasures that he brought home with him. In a bamboo roll he had his pass and the certificate of good conduct. In a small cylindrical case attached to a leather strap, something heavy seemed constantly to be tapping against his shoulder, but he liked to feel this. . . . I should think so! In it were thirty Spanish dollars, enough to buy three buffaloes with. What would Adinda say! And this was not all. On his back one saw the silver-mounted sheath of a dagger which he wore in his belt. The hilt was no doubt of finely chiselled *kamooning*,¹ for he had wrapped it most carefully in a silk kerchief. And he had still more treasures. In the knot of the cloth round his loins he kept a stomacher of broad silver links with a golden fastening. It is true, the stomacher was short, but she was so slender . . . Adinda!

And attached to a cord round his neck, beneath his singlet, he carried a little silk bag containing some dried melatti.

Was it to be wondered that he did not delay at Tangerang longer than was necessary to visit the friend of his father who matted such dainty straw hats? Was it to be wondered that he had little to say to the girls he met on the road, who asked him "Whither and whence?" which is the greeting in these parts? Was it to be wondered that he no longer thought Serang so important looking, he who had come to know Batavia? That he no

¹ A costly Javanese wood.

longer hid in the hedge as he had done three years before, when the Resident drove past, he that had seen the much greater lord who lives at Buitenzorg, and who is the grandfather ¹ of the prince of Solo? Was it to be wondered that he paid little attention to the stories of people who walked with him part of the way and told him all the news of Bantan Kedool? That he scarce listened when he was told that the coffee-culture, after much unrewarded labour, had been entirely abandoned? That the District-Chief of Parang-Koodyang had been sentenced, for robbery on the public road, to fourteen days' detention in the house of his father-in-law? That the head-centre had been removed to Rangkas-Betoong? That a new Assistant-Resident had arrived because the previous one had died a few months since? And how this new official had spoken at the first meeting of the sebah? How for some time now no one had been punished on any charge, and how it was hoped among the population that all that had been stolen would be returned or made good?

No, before his soul's eye there were sweeter visions. He looked in the clouds for the ketapan-tree, as he was still too far to find it at Badoor. He grasped at the surrounding air, as though he would embrace the form that would be waiting for him under that tree. He pictured to himself Adinda's face, her head, her shoulder . . . he saw the heavy hair-tress, so shining black, caught in its own loop, hanging down on her neck . . . he saw her large eyes, lustrous in dark reflection . . . the nostrils she so proudly drew up as a child, when he — how was it possible! — teased her, and the corner of her lips wherein she kept a smile. He saw her breast, that would now be swelling under the shawl . . . he saw how the garment which she herself had woven narrowly enclosed her hips, and, following the thigh in its curve, fell along the knee in beautiful waving lines on to the small foot.

No, he heard but little of what people told him. He heard very different notes. He heard how Adinda would say: "Be welcome,

¹ A naïve native conception.

Saïdyah! I have thought of you while spinning and weaving, and while pounding the rice in the block that carries three times twelve notches made by my hand. Here I am under the ketapan, the first day of the new moon. Be welcome, Saïdyah, I will be your wife!"

That was the music which sounded in his ear, and prevented him from listening to all the news people told him on the way.

At last he saw the ketapan. Or rather he saw a dark space which covered many stars before his eyes. That must be the diati-wood, near the tree where he was to see Adinda again, next day at sunrise. He searched in the dark, and felt the stems of many trees. Soon he found a well-known unevenness on the south side of a tree, and laid his finger in a nick which Si-Panteh had cut in it with his hatchet, in order to exorcize the evil spirit who was the cause of the tooth-ache of Si-Panteh's mother, shortly before the birth of his little brother. This was the ketapan he sought.

Yes, this indeed was the spot where for the first time he had seen Adinda with other eyes than the rest of his playfellows, because there for the first time she had refused to take part in a game that, after all, she had played with all the children, boys and girls, only a little while before. There she had given him the melatti.

He sat down at the foot of the tree, and looked up at the stars. And when one of them set, he took it as a greeting on his return to Badoor. And he wondered whether Adinda would now be asleep. And whether she had correctly marked the moons in her rice-block. It would grieve him so very much if she had missed one, as though it were not enough . . . six-and-thirty! And whether she had painted pretty shawls and skirts. And also he asked himself with some curiosity who might now be living in his father's house. And his youth came back to him, and his mother, and how the buffalo had saved him from the tiger, and he could not help musing on what might have become of Adinda if that buffalo had been less faithful.

He particularly watched the setting of the stars in the west, and with every star that vanished over the horizon he calculated

how the sun was again a little nearer to its rising in the east, and how much nearer he himself was to the meeting with Adinda.

For she was sure to come at the first gleam, nay, she would already be there at the glimmer of early dawn. . . . Ah! why had she not already come the day before?

It made him sad that she had not anticipated it, the glorious moment which for three years had shone before him with indescribable radiance. And unjust as he was in the selfishness of his love, it seemed to him that Adinda should have been there, waiting for *him*, who now complained — before the time already! — that he had to wait for *her*.

But he complained without cause. For still the sun had not yet risen, still the eye of day had not cast its first glance on the plain. Certainly, the stars were paling above, ashamed that soon there would be an end to their reign . . . and strange colours floated across the summits of the mountains, which appeared darker as they were outlined more sharply on a lighter background . . . and here and there through the clouds in the East sped something flaming — arrows of gold and fire shot hither and thither, parallel with the skyline — but anon they vanished and seemed to fall behind the impenetrable curtain that ever still hid the day from Saïdyah's eyes.

Yet gradually lighter and lighter it grew around him. He already saw the landscape, and already he distinguished the comb of the klappa-wood in which Badoor lies hidden. . . . There slept Adinda.

No, she slept no longer! How could she sleep? Did she not know that Saïdyah would be waiting for her? Oh, surely, she had not slept all night! Doubtless the night-watcher had knocked at her door to ask why the lamp continued to burn in her little dwelling, and with a sweet laugh she had told him that a promise kept her awake to finish weaving the skirt she was working at, and that had to be ready for the first day of the new moon.

Or she had passed the night in darkness, sitting on her rice-

block, and counting with eager finger, to see that for sure thirty-six deep notches were carved on it side by side. And she had amused herself with artful pretence of fright, imagining that perhaps she miscounted, and that perhaps one of them was still wanting, so that again, and still again, and every time she might delight in the glorious certainty that without a shadow of doubt three times twelve moons had passed by since Saïdyah saw her for the last time.

She also, seeing it already grow so light, would strain her eyes with vain endeavour to bend her glances beyond the horizon, that they might meet the sun, the laggard sun, that tarried . . . tarried . . .

Then came a line of bluish red, that fixed itself upon the clouds, and their rims grew light and glowing, and the lightning flashed, and again fiery arrows shot through the expanse, but this time they did not fall, they settled firmly on the dark background, and communicated their glow in ever larger and larger circles, and met crossing, swinging, winding, straying, and they united into fire sheaves, and flashed in golden gleams on a sky of nacre, and there were red, and blue, and yellow, and silver, and purple, and azure in it all . . . O, God! that was the dawn; that was the coming of Adinda!

Saïdyah had not learnt to pray, and it would have been a pity to teach him, for holier prayer and thanksgiving more fervent than was found in the speechless ecstasy of his soul would be impossible to express in human language.

He wished not to go to Badoor. The actual meeting with Adinda in itself appeared to him less glorious than the certainty that presently he *would* meet her again. He sat down at the foot of the ketapan, and let his eyes stray about the landscape. Nature smiled on him and seemed to bid him welcome as a mother her returned child. And just as such a one depicts her joy by a deliberate remembrance of past sorrow in showing what she had preserved as a keepsake during absence, thus also Saïdyah derived pleasure from seeing again so many spots that had witnessed his short life. But

however much his eyes or his thoughts might wander around, every time his glance and his longing returned to the path that leads from Badoor to the ketapan. All that his senses became aware of bore the name Adinda. He saw the precipice on the left, where the earth is so yellow, and where once a young buffalo sank into the depth; there the villagers had come together to remove the animal — for it is no small matter to lose a young buffalo — and they had let each other down by strong rattan cords. Adinda's father had been bravest . . . Oh, how she had clapped her hands, Adinda!

And yonder, on the other side, where the small clump of coco-palms waves above the huts of the village, somewhere there Si-oonah had fallen out of a tree and died. How his mother had cried: "Because Si-oonah was still so small," she wailed . . . as though she would have been less grieved if Si-oonah had been bigger! But it is true that he *was* small, for he was smaller and weaker even than Adinda.

No one came along the little road that led from Badoor to the tree. Presently she would come: Oh, certainly . . . it was still so early!

Saïdyah saw a badying¹ hopping to and fro with sportive nimbleness about the stem of a klappa-tree. The little creature — the vexation of the owner of the tree, yet so charming in its appearance and movements — clambered up and down indefatigably. Saïdyah saw it and forced himself to keep looking at it, because this gave some rest to his thoughts after the strenuous labour they had been engaged in since sunrise . . . rest from the exhausting strain of waiting. Anon his impressions took the form of words, and he sang what was passing in his soul. I would sooner *read* his song to you in Malay, this Italian of the East, but here is the translation:

"See how the badying seeks food for his sustenance
In the klappa-tree. He climbs, descends, he frolics to right and left,

¹ Squirrel.

He goes round the tree, leaps, falls, rises and falls again:
He has no wings, and yet is swift as a bird.

"Happiness to you, my bading, happiness and hail!
Doubtless you will find the food you seek . . .
But I sit lonely near the diati-wood,
Waiting for the food of my heart.

"Long has the belly of my bading been filled . . .
Long has he returned to the comfort of his nest . . .
But ever my soul
And my heart are bitter with sadness . . . Adinda!"

Still there was no one on the path that leads from Badoor to the ketapan.

Saidyah's glance fell on a butterfly that seemed to rejoice because it was growing warm.

"See how the butterfly flutters hither and thither.
His tiny wings shine like a many-tinted flower.
His little heart loves the blossom of the kenari:
He surely seeks his sweet-scented lover!

"Happiness to you, my butterfly, happiness and hail!
Doubtless you will find what you seek . . .
But I sit lonely near the diati-wood,
Waiting for the love of my heart.

"Long has the butterfly kissed
The kenari-blossom he so much loves . . .
But ever my soul
And my heart are bitter with sadness . . . Adinda!"

And there was no one on the path that led from Badoor to the tree.

The sun was already rising high . . . there was already heat in the air.

"See, how the sun glitters yonder: high,
High above the waringi-hill!
Too warm she feels, and wishes to sink down
To sleep in the sea as in the arms of a husband.

"Happiness to you, O sun, all hail and happiness!
What you seek you will surely find . . .
But I sit lonely near the diati-wood,
Waiting that my heart may find rest.

"Long will the sun have gone down,
And be asleep in the sea, while all is dark . . .
And still my soul
And my heart will be bitter with sadness . . . Adinda!"

Still there was no one on the road that leads from Badoor to the ketapan.

"When butterflies no longer flutter round,
When stars no more shall glitter,
When the melatti is no longer sweet-scented,
When there are no more sad hearts;
Nor wild beasts in the forest . . .
When the sun shall turn on her path,
And the moon forget East and West . . .
If then Adinda has still not come,
Then an angel with bright glowing wings
Shall come to the earth to find him that stayed behind.
Then shall my body lie under the ketapan. . . .
My soul is bitter with sadness . . . Adinda!"

Still there was no one on the road that led from Badoor to the ketapan.

"Then shall my body be seen by the angel.
He will show it to his brothers with his finger:

"See, a man has died and been forgotten!
His rigid mouth kisses a melatti-flower.
Come, let us lift him up and take him to heaven,
Who waited for Adinda until he died!
He surely ought not to be left behind,
Whose heart had the strength to love so deeply!"

"Then once more my rigid mouth will open
To call Adinda, whom my heart loves . . .
Once more I shall kiss the melatti
Given to me by her . . . Adinda . . . Adinda!"

And ever still there was no one on the path that led from Badoor to the tree.

Oh, no doubt she had fallen asleep towards dawn, tired of keeping awake through the night, of keeping awake through the length of several nights! No doubt she had not slept for weeks: that was it!

Should he arise and go to Badoor? No! Could he let it appear as though he had a doubt of her coming?

Suppose he called the man yonder who was driving his buffalo to the field? But that man was too far. And besides, Saïdyah wished not to speak *about* Adinda, not to ask *after* Adinda . . . he wished to *meet her alone, her first!* Oh, doubtless, doubtless she would soon come now!

He would wait, wait . . .

But if she were ill, or . . . dead?

Like a wounded deer Saïdyah flew up the path that leads from the ketapan to the village where Adinda lived. He saw nothing and heard nothing, and yet he might have heard something, for there were people standing in the road at the entrance to the village, who called: "Saïdyah! Saïdyah!"

But . . . was it his haste, his passion, which made him unable to find Adinda's house? Already he had rushed on to the end of the road where the village stops, and like a madman he returned, and beat his forehead because he had been able to pass her house without seeing it. But again he was at the entrance — and, my God, was it a dream? again he had not found Adinda's house! Once more he flew back, and all at once he stood still, grasped his head with both his hands, as if to press out of it the madness that came over him, and called loudly: "Drunk, I am drunk!"

And the women of Badoor came out of their houses, and with pity saw poor Saïdyah standing there, for they recognized him, and understood that he was looking for Adinda's house, and they knew that there was no house of Adinda in the village of Badoor.

For when the District-Chief of Parang-Koodyang had taken the buffalo of Adinda's father . . .

I have told you, reader, that my story is monotonous.

. . . then Adinda's mother had died with fretting. And her baby sister had died because she had no mother to suckle her. And Adinda's father feared the punishment if he did not pay his land-rent. . . .

I know it, I know it, my story is monotonous!

. . . Adinda's father had gone away from the country, and had taken Adinda with him, and her brothers. But he had heard that Saïdyah's father had been punished at Buitenzorg with rattan-strokes, because he had left Badoor without a pass. And therefore Adinda's father had not gone to Buitenzorg, nor to Krawang, nor to the Preanger, nor to the Batavian out-districts . . . he had gone to Tjilang-Kahan, the district of Lebak which borders on the sea. There he had hidden in the woods and awaited the arrival of Pa-Ento, Pa-Lontah, Si-Ooniah, Pa-Ansioo, Abdool-Isma, and yet a few others who had been robbed of their buffaloes by the District-Chief of Parang-Koodyang, and who all feared the punishment if they did not pay their land-rent. There, during the night, they had seized a fishing-prao, and had put out to sea. They had steered a westerly course, keeping the land to the right of them as far as Java-Point. Thence they had steered northwards until they saw before them Tanah-itam, that the European sailors call Princes Island. They had sailed round the eastern coast of that island, and then they had made for Kaiser's Bay, taking their bearings by the high point in the Lampongs. This at any rate was the route that people in Lebak whispered into each other's ears whenever there was talk of official buffalo-theft and unpaid land-rent.

But Saïdyah, half dazed, did not clearly understand what they told him. He even did not quite grasp the tidings of his father's death. There was a dinning in his ears as though someone was beating a gong in his head. He felt the blood forced with jerks through the veins at his temples, that threatened to burst under the pressure of so severe an expansion. He did not speak, and

stared around with a vacant look without seeing what was near and about him, and at last he burst into ghastly laughter.

An old woman took him along to her little house, and looked after the poor crazy one. Soon he no longer laughed so horribly, but yet he did not speak. Only during the night those who shared the hut with him were startled awake by his voice, when he sang in a toneless manner — “I know not where I shall die.” Some of the inhabitants of Badoor put money together to pay for a sacrifice to the alligators of the Tjiodyoong for the recovery of Saïdyah, who was looked upon as demented.

But demented he was not.

For one night when the moon shone brightly, he rose from his stretcher, and stole softly out of the house, and searched for the place where Adinda had lived. It was not easy to find, as so many houses had fallen into ruins. But he seemed to recognize the place from the width of the angle which some of the lines of light between the trees formed in meeting his eye, as the sailor takes his bearings from certain beacons or from prominent mountain-heights.

Yes, it must be there . . . there it was that Adinda had lived!

Stumbling over half-decayed bamboos and fragments of the fallen roof, he cleared for himself a way to the sanctuary he sought. And indeed, he still found portions of the upright fence next to which Adinda's stretcher had stood, and stuck in this fence there was still the bamboo pin on which she had hung her garment when she lay down to sleep. . . .

But the stretcher had fallen in like the house, and was almost decayed to dust. He picked up a handful of it, pressed it to his open lips, and breathed very deeply. . . .

Next day he asked the old woman who had looked after him where the rice-block was that had stood on the ground of Adinda's house. The woman was rejoiced to hear him speak, and went all over the village to find that block. When she was able to tell Saïdyah who was the new owner, he followed her silently, and,

taken to the rice-block, he counted on it thirty-two carved notches. . . .

Then he gave the old woman as many Spanish dollars as would pay for a buffalo, and left Badoor. At Tjilangkahan, he bought a fisherman's prao, and with it, after a few days' sailing, reached the Lampongs, where the rebels resisted the Dutch Government.

He joined a band of Bantammers, not so much for the purpose of fighting as for that of finding Adinda. For he was of a gentle nature, and more susceptible to sorrow than to bitterness.

One day when the rebels had been again defeated, he wandered about in a village that had just been taken by the Dutch army, and that therefore was in flames. Saïdyah knew that the band which had there been annihilated had consisted largely of Bantammers. Like a ghost he roamed about in the huts that were not yet entirely destroyed by the fire, and found the dead body of Adinda's father with a klewang-bayonet wound in the breast. Next to him Saïdyah saw the three murdered brothers of Adinda, youths, almost children yet, and a little farther the body of Adinda, naked, horribly mutilated. . . .

A narrow strip of blue linen had entered into the gaping breast-wound that appeared to have ended a prolonged struggle. . . .

Then Saïdyah ran towards some Dutch soldiers who with levelled muskets drove the last surviving rebels into the fire of the burning houses. He threw himself on the broad-sword bayonets, pressed forward with all his might, and with a final effort pushed back the soldiers until the bayonets pierced him to the hilts.

And shortly after there was great jubilation in Batavia on account of the latest victory which again had added so many laurels to those already won by the Dutch-Indian army. And the Governor-General wrote to the Motherland that peace had been restored in the Lampongs. And the King of the Netherlands, advised by his Ministers, again rewarded so much heroism with many orders of knighthood.

And probably in the Churches on Sunday, or at the prayer-meetings, there rose to heaven, from the hearts of the pious, prayers of thanksgiving on learning that the "Lord of Hosts" had again fought under the banner of The Netherlands. . . .

"But moved by so much woe, that day
God turned their prayer of thanks away!"¹

¹ Translated quotation from a well-known Dutch poem, of distinctly mediocre merit, pompous, stodgy, and religious. Intentionally selected by the author, for quotation in connection with the preceding paragraphs. *Trsl.*



CHAPTER XVII — *Continued*

I HAVE made the conclusion of the story of *Saïdyah* shorter than I might have done if I had felt inclined to a description of horrors. The reader will note how I dwelt on the account of my hero's watch under the *ketapan*, as though I feared the approach of the grievous dénouement, on which aversion made me touch only lightly. And yet this was not my intention when I began to write about *Saïdyah*. For at the outset I feared that I should need stronger colouring to move the reader with the description of such strange conditions. But little by little I realized that it would be an insult to my public to believe that I ought to have spilt more blood on my picture.

And yet I might have done so, for I have before me documents . . . but no: I will rather make a confession.

Yes, a confession, reader! I do not know whether *Saïdyah* loved *Adinda*. Nor whether he went to *Batavia*. Nor whether he was murdered in the *Lampongs* with Dutch bayonets. I do not know whether his father succumbed in consequence of the *rattan*-scourging he received for having left *Badoor* without a passport. I do not know whether *Adinda* counted the moons by notches in her rice-block. . . .

All this I do *not* know!

But I know *more* than all this. I know *and I can prove* that there were many *Adindas* and many *Saïdyahs*, and that *what is fiction in a particular case is truth in general*. I have said that I can give the names of persons who, like the parents of *Saïdyah* and *Adinda*, were driven out of their country by oppression. It is not my object to give in this work statements such as would be required before a Court of Justice sitting to pronounce a verdict on the manner in which Dutch authority is exercised in India, statements that would

only have force as evidence for those who had the patience to read them through with attention and interest, which cannot be expected from a public that reads for diversion. For this reason, instead of dry names of persons and places, with dates, instead of a copy of *the list of thefts and extortions which lies before me*, instead of these I have endeavoured to give a sketch of what *may* pass in the hearts of the poor people who are robbed of that which has to serve for their maintenance, or I have even only allowed this to be guessed, fearing that I might be too greatly mistaken in delineating emotions which I never experienced.

But as to the *main point*? Oh, that I were but summoned to prove what I have written! Oh, that they might say: "You have invented this *Saïdyah* . . . he never sang that song . . . no *Adinda* ever lived at *Badoor*!" But then also, might it be said with the power and the desire to do justice, as soon as I had given the proofs that I am not a slanderer!

Is the parable of the good Samaritan a lie, because perhaps no robbed traveller was ever received in a Samaritan house? Is the parable of the Sower a lie, because no husbandman would cast his seed on a rock? Or — coming down to a level nearer to my book — may one deny the truth which is the main point in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, because perhaps there never was an *Evangeline*? Shall it be said to the writer of that immortal plea — immortal, not on account of art or talent, but because of its *tendency* and the *impression* made by it — shall it be said to her: "You have lied, the slaves are not ill-treated, for . . . there is untruth in your book: it is a novel"? Was not she also compelled to give, instead of an enumeration of dry facts, a story that clothed those facts, so that the realization of the need of reform might penetrate to the hearts? Would her book have been read, if she had given it in the form of a court-case? Is it her fault — or mine — that the truth, in order to gain access, has so often to borrow the guise of a lie?

And to others who will perhaps contend that I have idealized *Saïdyah* and his love, I must put the question: "How can you know

this? ” For is it not a fact that only very few Europeans consider it worth while to condescend to an observation of the emotions of the coffee- and sugar-producing machines we call “Natives”? But even suppose their remarks were well-founded, he that adduces such considerations as a proof against the main tendency of my book gives me a great victory. For, translated, these considerations are as follows: “The evil you combat does not exist, or not in so high a degree, *because* the Native is not like your *Saïdyah* . . . there is in the ill-treatment of the Javanese not so great an evil as would be the case if you had drawn your *Saïdyah* more accurately. This Soondanese does not sing such songs, loves not thus, feels not thus, and therefore . . .”

No, Minister for the Colonies, no, Governor-General retired from active service, it is not *that* which you have to prove! You have to prove that the population is not ill-treated, apart from the question whether or no there are sentimental *Saïdyahs* among the population. Or would you dare maintain that it was lawful to steal buffaloes from people who do *not* love, who sing *no* melancholy songs, who are *not* sentimental?

If an attack were made from a literary point of view, I should defend the accuracy of my drawing of *Saïdyah*; but as a question of politics I would at once concede any strictures on this accuracy, in order to prevent the main argument from being shifted to wrong premises. It is all the same to me whether I am considered an incompetent artist, provided the admission be made that the ill-treatment of the native is: OUTRAGEOUS! For that is the word used in the note of Havelaar’s predecessor, and shown to Controller Verbrugge: *a note which I have in front of me.*

But I have other proof! And this is fortunate, for even Havelaar’s predecessor might have been mistaken.

Alas! if *he* was mistaken, he was severely punished for his mistake. He was *murdered*.



CHAPTER XVIII

It was afternoon. Havelaar came out of his room, and found his Tine in the front veranda, waiting with the tea. Mrs. Slotering came out of her house, and looked as if she were coming across to the Havelaars; but all at once she turned to the gate, and made violent signs to a man to go back, who had just that moment entered. She stood still until she was assured that he had gone back and was outside, after which she came along the grass-plot to Havelaar's house.

"I am going for once and for all to find out the meaning of this!" said Havelaar, and after welcoming her, he asked in a jocular manner, so that she might not think that he begrudged her a little authority over grounds that formerly were hers:

"Well, Mrs. Slotering, I wish you would tell me why you are so determined to turn back the people who come into the grounds! Suppose now that man who came in a moment past had some chickens for sale, or something else that might be of use in the kitchen!"

There appeared on the face of Mrs. Slotering a pained expression which did not escape Havelaar's attention.

"Oh," she said, "there are so many bad people!"

"Certainly, that's the case everywhere. But if one makes it so difficult for people to enter, the good ones will keep away too. Come now, Mrs. Slotering, do tell me quite frankly why you keep such a strict supervision over the grounds!"

Havelaar looked at her, and vainly tried to read the answer in her moist eyes. He pressed a little harder for an explanation . . . the widow burst into tears, and said that her husband had been poisoned at the house of the District-Chief at *Parang-Koodyang*.

"He wished to be just, Mr. Havelaar," the poor woman went on, "he wished to put a stop to the ill-treatment under which the population groaned. He admonished and threatened the Chiefs, at meetings and in writing . . . you must have found his letters in the archives!"

That was true. Havelaar had read those letters, *copies of which lie before me*.

"Over and over again he talked with the Resident," continued the widow, "but always to no purpose. For as it was universally known that the extortions took place on behalf and under protection of the Regent, whom the Resident did not wish to charge before the Government, all those interviews led to nothing but the ill-treatment of the complainants. Therefore my poor husband had said that, if there were no improvement before the end of the year, he would address the Governor-General himself. That was in November. Shortly after he set out on a tour of inspection, took dinner at the house of the *Dhemang* of *Parang Koodyang*, and was soon after brought home in a pitiable condition. He cried, pointing to his stomach: 'Fire, fire!' and a few hours later he was dead, he who had always been a picture of perfect health."

"Did you send for the doctor from *Serang*?" asked Havelaar.

"Yes, but he only treated my husband a very short time, as the death took place soon after his arrival. I was afraid to tell the doctor my suspicion, as I foresaw, on account of my condition, that I should not be able to leave this place for some time, and I feared vengeance. I have heard that you, like my husband, are resisting the abuses that are prevalent here, and on this account I have not a peaceful moment. I had wished to conceal all this from you, in order not to alarm yourself and your wife, and therefore confined myself to watching the garden and grounds, so that no strangers should have access to the kitchen."

Now it became clear to Tine why Mrs. Slotering had continued to carry on her own household, and had not even wished to make use of the kitchen, "although it was so large."

Havelaar sent for the Controller. Meanwhile he addressed a re-

quest to the doctor at *Serang* for a statement of the symptoms observed at Slotering's death. The answer he received to this request was not in accordance with the suspicions of the widow. According to the doctor Slotering had died from an "abscess in the liver." I have not been able to obtain evidence as to whether such a complaint can show itself all of a sudden, and cause death in a few hours. I am of the opinion that here Mrs. Slotering's declaration that her husband had until that occasion always been healthy demands serious attention. But if one attaches no importance to such a declaration, seeing that the conception as to what constitutes *health*, especially in the eyes of non-medical persons, is very subjective, yet the important question remains whether a person who dies to-day from an "abscess in the liver" could yesterday have mounted *on horseback*, with the intention of inspecting a mountainous region so extensive that in some parts its width would constitute a twenty hours' journey. The doctor who treated Slotering may have been an able physician, and yet have been mistaken in his opinion as to the symptoms of the illness, unprepared as he was for the suspicion of crime.

However this may be, I cannot prove that Havelaar's predecessor was poisoned, as the authorities did not leave Havelaar the necessary time to try successfully to throw light on the question. But I certainly can prove *that those about him considered he had been poisoned*, and that they connected this suspicion with his desire to resist injustice.

Controller Verbrugge entered Havelaar's room. The latter asked briefly:

"What did Mr. Slotering die of?"

"I don't know."

"Was he poisoned?"

"I don't know, but . . ."

"Speak plainly, Verbrugge!"

"He tried, like you, to resist the abuses, Mr. Havelaar, and . . . and . . ."

"Well, go on!"

"I am convinced that he . . . would have been poisoned if he had been here longer."

"Write that down!"

Verbrugge wrote those words down. *His declaration lies before me!*

"Another thing. Is it true or *not* true that extortion is practised in *Lebak*?"

Verbrugge did not answer.

"Answer, Verbrugge!"

"I dare not."

"Write it down, that you dare not!"

Verbrugge wrote it down: *it lies before me.*

"Now, yet another thing: you dare not answer the last question, but you said to me recently, when there was a question of *poisoning*, that you were the only support of your sister at *Batavia*, isn't that so? Is that perhaps the cause of your fear, the root of what I always called *halfness*?"

"Yes!"

"Write that down."

Verbrugge wrote it down: *his declaration lies before me.*

"All right," said Havelaar, "now I know enough." And Verbrugge was allowed to go.

Havelaar went outside and played with little Max, whom he kissed with more tenderness even than usual. When Mrs. Slotering had gone, he sent the child away, and called Tine into his room.

"Dear Tine, I have to ask you a favour. I wish you to go to *Batavia* with Max: to-day I shall inform against the Regent."

She put her arms around his neck, and for the first time refused to obey his wish; she cried sobbing:

"No, Max, no, Max, I won't . . . I won't! We shall eat and drink *together*!"

Had Havelaar been wrong, when he maintained that she was no more justified in blowing her nose than the women of Arles?

He wrote and sent off the letter of which I here give a copy.

After having to some extent sketched the circumstances in which this document was written, I do not think it necessary to point out the resolute dutifulness to which it bears witness, nor yet the kindness which moved Havelaar to try to protect the Regent from too severe a punishment. But it will not be equally superfluous to draw attention to his caution, which did not let him utter a word about the discovery just made, in order that the positive nature of his charge might not be weakened by uncertainty about an accusation undoubtedly most important, but as yet unproven. It was his intention to have the body of his predecessor disinterred and scientifically examined, as soon as the Regent should have been removed and his adherents rendered powerless for evil. But the opportunity was not to be given him.

In my copies of official documents — copies which in every essential correspond with the original — I think I may with advantage replace the senseless titles by simple pronouns. I expect from the good taste of my readers that they will be satisfied with this alteration.

“No. 88. *Secret*

“*Rangkas-Betoong*, 24th February, 1856.

“*Urgent*.

“To the Resident of *Bantam*.

“Since I took up my duties here a month ago, I have chiefly been occupied with an inquiry into the manner in which the Native Chiefs discharge their obligations towards the population as regards *master-service*, *poondoosan*¹ and similar matters.

“I very soon discovered that the Regent called up people, on his own authority and behalf, far in excess of the legally permitted number of *pantjans* and *kemits*.²

“I wavered between the choice of reporting at once officially, and

¹ Provisions and other articles levied without payment.

² Unpaid people employed as guards and servants.

the desire of turning the Native Chief-officer from these practices by kindness, or later even by threats, in order to attain the two-fold object of stopping the abuse and at the same time avoiding too severe a treatment of the old Government-servant on the first occasion, especially in view of the bad examples which, I believe, have often been set him, and also in connection with the special circumstance that he was expecting a visit from two relatives, the Regents of *Bandoong* and of *Tjanjor* — at least for certain from the latter, who, I believe, is already on the way with a numerous retinue — so that more than otherwise he was tempted, and, on account of the straitened condition of his finances, as it were compelled, to provide by unlawful means for the requisite preparation for that visit.

“All this moved me to a lenient view with regard to things that *had* already happened, but in no way to indulgence for the future.

“I insisted on an immediate cessation of every illegal practice.

“With my provisional attempt to bring the Regent by kindness to his duty I have previously acquainted you.

“It has, however, become evident to me that he flouts me in every way with insolent shamelessness, and in accordance with my official oath I feel it my duty to inform you:

“*That I accuse the Regent of Lebak, Radhen Adhipatti Karta Natta Nagara, of abuse of authority by illegal disposal of the labour of his subjects, and that I suspect him of extortion, by demanding produce in naturâ, without payment or else for payment arbitrarily fixed and insufficient;*

“*Further that I suspect his son-in-law, the Dhemang of Parang Koodyang, of complicity in the aforementioned acts.*

“In order that both indictments may be properly prepared by me, I take the liberty to propose that you instruct me:

“1° *to send the Regent of Lebak post-haste to Serang, taking every care that neither before his departure nor during the journey he be given the opportunity to influence, by bribery or other means, the testimonies I shall obtain;*

“2° *provisionally to arrest the Dhemang of Parang Koodyang;*

"3° to apply similar measures to such persons of a lesser rank as, belonging to the Regent's family, may be expected to influence the rigour of the proposed inquiry;

"4° to hold this inquiry at once, and to report fully on the result.

"I further take the liberty to suggest for your consideration that the visit of the Regent of *Tjanjor* be countermanded.

"Finally I have the honour to give the assurance — no doubt superfluously for you, who know the Division of *Lebak* better than is as yet possible for me — that from a *political* point of view a strictly just treatment of this matter can cause no danger, and that I should view with far greater apprehension the *neglect* to clear it up. For I have information to the effect that the people who, as a witness told me, are *poossing*¹ with vexation, have long been looking for deliverance.

"I have partly drawn strength, for the difficult duty I am fulfilling in writing this letter, from the hope that I shall be permitted in due time to urge certain reasons in extenuation of the old Regent, with whose position, however much the result of his own actions, I nevertheless feel deep sympathy.

"The Assistant-Resident of Lebak,

"MAX HAVELAAR."

Next day he received a reply from . . . the *Resident of Bantam*? Ah, no, from Mr. Slimering, in his *private* capacity!

This reply is a precious contribution to the knowledgē of the manner in which Government is carried out in Netherlands India. Mr. Slimering complained that Havelaar had not first acquainted him orally with the matters dealt with in letter No. 88. Of course there would then have been a better chance of *compromising*. And next that Havelaar *disturbed him in his pressing occupations*!

No doubt the man was occupied with an annual report on peaceful peace! I have his letter before me, and can scarcely trust my

¹ Desperate.

eyes. I re-read the letter of the Assistant-Resident of *Lebak*. . . . I place *him* and the Resident of *Bantam*, Havelaar and Slimering, side by side. . . .

That Shawlman turns out to be a common blackguard! You must know, reader, that Bastians is again often absent from Office, as he has lumbago. Now as I make it a matter of conscientious scruple not to squander the funds of the firm — Last & Co. — for I am unshaken in my principles, I yesterday remembered that after all Shawlman writes a moderately good hand, and as he looks so shabby, and therefore no doubt could be got for a modest wage, I felt that it was my duty to the firm to provide in the cheapest manner possible for replacing Bastians. So I went to the Long-Leiden-Side-Street. The woman of the shop was in front, but did not seem to recognize me, although I had recently told her quite plainly that I was *Mr. Drystubble, Coffee-broker, from the Laurier Canal*. That trick of not recognizing a person has always something odious about it, but as it is a little less cold now, and as on the previous occasion I wore my fur coat, I attribute it in this case to that coat, and shall not worry about it . . . I mean the insult. So I said once more that I was *Mr. Drystubble, Coffee-broker, from the Laurier Canal*, and asked her to go and see whether that Shawlman was at home, as I did not this time, as on the previous occasion, want to deal with his wife, who was always so discontented. But this second-hand shopwoman refused to go upstairs. She could not all day long be climbing stairs for that beggarly crew, she said; I had better go and see for myself. And then there was again a description of the stairs and portals, which I did not require at all, for I always recognize a place I have once visited, as I always take such notice of everything. That's a habit I have acquired in business. So I climbed up the stairs, and knocked at the old door, which opened at my touch. I entered, and as I found no one in the room, I had a look round. Well, there wasn't much to see. A pair of short pants with an embroidered strip was hanging on a chair . . . why do

such people want to wear embroidered pants? In a corner stood a travelling-trunk, not very heavy, which without thinking I half raised by one handle, and on the mantelpiece lay some books, which I just had a look at. A curious collection! A couple of volumes of *Byron*, *Horatius*, *Bastiat*, *Béranger*, and . . . just guess! A Bible, a complete Bible, with even the *Apocrypha* in it! That I certainly had not expected at Shawlman's. And it seemed to have been read, too, for I found quite a number of notes on loose bits of paper, which related to the Scriptures — he says that Eve came into the world twice . . . the man is mad! — well, everything was in the same handwriting as the documents in that cursed bundle. He seemed to have made a special study of the Book of Job, for there the leaves were dog-eared. I suppose that he is beginning to feel the hand of the Lord, and that therefore he wants to reconcile himself with God by reading the holy books. I don't object. But while I was still waiting, my glances lighted on a lady's work-box which stood on the table. I looked at it unintentionally. There was in it a pair of child's half-finished stockings, a lot of silly verses, and also a letter to Shawlman's wife, as was evident from the superscription. The letter had been opened, and looked as if it had been crumpled up in anger. Now it is a fixed principle with me never to read anything that is not addressed to me, as I don't think it good manners. So I never do it when I am not interested. But now I had an inspiration that it was my duty just to have a look at that letter, because the contents might perhaps enlighten me with regard to my humanitarian intention in visiting Shawlman. I reflected how surely the Lord is always with His own, as now He unexpectedly gave me the opportunity to get to know a little more about that man, and so protected me against the danger of doing a benefit to an immoral person. I pay scrupulous attention to such directions from the Lord, and it has often been of great use to me in business. To my amazement I saw that the wife of this Shawlman belonged to a vĕry good family, at least the letter was signed by a relative whose name in Holland is most dis-

tinguished, and I was really elated with the beautiful contents of that missive. He seemed to be someone who worked diligently for the Lord, for he wrote that the wife of Shawlman ought to obtain a separation from such a wretch, who allowed her to suffer poverty, who was not able to earn his living, and who moreover was a scoundrel, as he was in debt . . . that the writer of the letter was concerned about her condition, although she had brought her fate upon herself by her own fault, as she had forsaken the Lord, and stuck to Shawlman . . . that she must return to the Lord, and that then probably the whole family would put their heads together to try to get her needlework to do . . . but before all she must get separated from that Shawlman, who was a real disgrace to the family.

In short, one could not havē found more edification in the Church than there was in that letter.

I knew enough, and was grateful for having been warned in so wonderful a manner. For without that warning, shouldn't I again have become the victim of my own kind heart? I therefore decided once more that I should keep Bastians until I found a suitable substitute, for I hate driving anyone out into the street, and at present we can't spare one employee, as there is so much doing with us.

The reader will no doubt be curious to know how I got on at the last party, and whether I found the triolet. Well, I never went to that party. Most wonderful things have happened: I have been to Driebergen with my wife and Marie. My father-in-law, old Last, the son of the first Last — when the Meyers were still in it, but they arē out of it long ago — had over and over again said that he would like to see my wife and Marie. Now it happened to be good weather, and my dread of the love-story Stern had threatened us with suddenly brought back to my mind that invitation. I spoke about it to our book-keeper, who is a man of much experience, and who after mature reflection submitted to me for consider-

ation the suggestion that I should let a night pass before deciding. I at once determined to do so, for I am quick in carrying my resolutions into effect. The very next day I realized how sensible the advice had been, for night had given me the idea that I could do no better than put off my decision until Friday. Briefly, after having weighed all the pros and cons maturely — there was much in favour, but also much against — we went on Saturday afternoon, and returned on the Monday morning. I should not relate all this so precisely if it were not closely connected with my book. First of all I am anxious for you to know why I do not protest against the foolish things Stern is sure to have again dished up last Sunday. What kind of a story is that, of a person who would hear something when he was dead! Marie referred to it. She had got it from the young Rosemeyers, who are in sugar. — Secondly, because I have once more become absolutely convinced that all those stories about distress and unrest in the East are pure lies. This shows how travelling gives one the opportunity to fathom things properly.

You must know that my father-in-law had accepted an invitation for Saturday night to go and see a gentleman who was formerly a Resident in the East, and who now lives in a large villa. We all went there, and truly I cannot speak highly enough of the charming reception we had. The gentleman had sent his carriage to meet us, and the coachman wore a red waistcoat. It was certainly a little too cold yet to see the country place properly, though it must be splendid in summer. But inside the house you could not wish for anything they hadn't got, everything to make life enjoyable: a billiard-room, a library, a covered-in glass house in the form of a gallery, and the cockatoo had a silver perch to sit on. I had never seen anything like it, and at once remarked how good conduct always receives its reward. The man had most carefully looked after his affairs, for he had quite three decorations. He owned this delightful country place, and in addition a house in

Amsterdam. At supper everything was cooked with truffles, and the servants at the table also wore red waistcoats, the same as the coachman.

As I take a great interest in Indian affairs — on account of the coffee — I turned the conversation to that subject, and soon saw what to think of it all. This Resident told me that he had always done very well in the East, and therefore there is not a word of truth in all those tales about discontentment among the population. I turned the conversation to Shawlman. He knew him, and that in a very unfavourable light. He assured me that they had done quite right in sacking that fellow, for he was a very discontented person, who was always fault-finding, whilst in addition there was much to be criticized in his own conduct. For instance, he was always carrying off girls, and taking them to his wife, and he did not pay his debts, which surely is not very respectable. Now as I knew so well from the letter I had read how true all these charges were, I was greatly pleased to see how accurately I had judged in this matter, and was therefore specially satisfied with myself. And for this, I may say, I am well-known at my pillar . . . I mean for judging so accurately.

That Resident and his wife were charming, generous people. They told us much of their manner of life in the East. It really seems to be very pleasant there. They said their country place at Dribergen was not half as large as their “grounds,” as they called it, in the interior of Java, and for the maintenance of those grounds quite a hundred people were required. But — and this seems to prove clearly how much they were liked — those people did this altogether without payment, and entirely from affection. They also said that on their departure the sale of their furniture had brought them about ten times the value, because the Native Chiefs like to buy a souvenir of a Resident who has been kind to them. I told Stern this afterwards, and he contended that it was done by coercion, and that he could prove this from Shawlman’s bundle. But I said to him that this Shawlman was a slanderer, that he used to

carry off girls — just like that young German at Busselinck & Waterman's — and that I attached no value whatever to his opinion, for that now I had personally heard from a Resident how matters stood, and therefore had nothing to learn from Mr. Shawlman.

There were several other people from the East present that evening, amongst others a gentleman who was very rich, and still made much money out of tea, which the Javanese prepared for him for little money, and which the Government bought from him at a high price, in order to encourage the industry of those Javanese. That gentleman also was very angry with all the discontented people who are always talking and writing against the Government. He hadn't words enough to praise the administration of the colonies, for he said he was convinced much money was lost on the tea they bought from him, and that therefore it was true generosity on their part to keep paying so high a price for an article that in reality had little value, and that he personally did not like (for he always drank Chinese tea). He also said that the Governor-General who had extended the so-called tea-contracts was, in spite of the calculation which proved that the Country lost so much in these transactions, such an able and good man, and especially such a faithful friend to those who had known him earlier. For that Governor-General had taken no notice whatever of the gossip about the losses on tea, and had, when the repeal of those contracts was mooted, I believe in 1846, done him personally a great service by decreeing that they should still continue to buy his tea. "Yes," he exclaimed, "my heart bleeds when I hear such noble people slandered! If it had not been for *him*, I and my wife and children would now have to walk instead of driving." Then he had his carriage called, and it looked so spick-and-span, and the horses were so well-fed, that I can quite well understand how one may burn with gratitude for such a Governor-General. It warms one's very soul to set eyes on such sweet emotions, especially on comparing them with the cursed grumbling and whining of creatures like that Shawlman.

The day after, this Resident paid us a return-visit, and so did the gentleman for whom the Javanese prepare tea. They are such nice people, and yet men of such importance! They both at the same time asked by what train we expected to arrive in Amsterdam. We did not understand the meaning of this, but afterwards it was cleared up, for when we arrived on the Monday morning, there were two servants at the station, one with a red waistcoat, and one with a yellow waistcoat, who each told us at the same time that they had received orders by telegram to meet us with a carriage. My wife was embarrassed, and I thought of what Busselinck & Waterman would have said if they had seen it . . . that there were two carriages for us at the same time, I mean. But it was not easy to make a choice, for I could not offend one of the two parties by declining so charming an attention. What was I to do? But again I managed to find my way out of that exceedingly difficult circumstance. I placed my wife and Marie in the red carriage — I mean the barouche of the red waistcoat — and myself stepped into the yellow one . . . I mean the carriage.

How those horses ran! In the Weesper-street, which is always so dirty, the mud flew up to right and left house-high, and, as fate would have it, there we passed that vagabond of a Shawlman, with a stoop, his head bowed down, and I saw how with the sleeve of his shabby short coat he tried to wipe the splashes from his face. I have rarely had a pleasanter outing, and my wife said the same thing.



CHAPTER XIX

IN the private note Mr. Slimering sent to Havelaar, he informed him that in spite of his "pressing occupations" he would come to *Rangkas-Betoong* the next day, in order to discuss what ought to be done. Havelaar, who knew only too well what such discussion meant — had not his predecessor so often "conferred" with the Resident of *Bantam*? — wrote the following letter, which he sent to meet the Resident in order that the latter should have read it before his arrival at the head-centre of *Lebak*. Comment on this document is superfluous.

"No. 61. *Secret*."

"*Rangkas-Betoong*, 25th February, 1856.

"*Urgent*."

"Yesterday at noon I had the honour to send you my urgent missive No. 88, substantially stating:

"That, after long investigation, and after having vainly sought, by gentle means, to turn the person concerned from his culpable action, I felt compelled by my official oath to charge the Regent of Lebak with abuse of authority, and that I suspected him of extortion."

"I took the liberty in that letter to suggest that you should call this Native Chief to *Serang*, in order to commence, *after his departure and after neutralizing the corrupting influence of his numerous family*, an examination of the soundness both of my charge and of my suspicion.

"Long, or rather *deeply*, had I reflected before I decided to take this course.

“Owing to my precaution it was known to you that I had tried by repeated exhortation and threat to save the old Regent from misfortune and ignominy, and myself from the deep sorrow of being the cause — although only the immediately preceding cause — of it.

“But I saw on the other hand the *sorely oppressed* population, *exploited for years*, I thought of the urgent necessity of an example — for I shall have to report to you *many other vexations*, at least if the reaction of *this* affair does not put a stop to them — and, I repeat, *after mature consideration* I did what I took to be my duty.

“At this moment I have just received your courteous and esteemed private letter, informing me that you will be here to-morrow, and at the same time hinting that I should have done better first to deal with this matter privately.

“To-morrow, therefore, I shall have the honour of seeing you, and it is exactly for this reason that I take the liberty to send this letter in time to reach you on the road, so that before our meeting I may place in your hands the following statement:

“All that I have inquired into concerning the actions of the Regent has been done in profound secrecy. Only *himself* and the *Patteh* knew of it, for I had loyally warned him. Even the Controller so far knows the result of my investigations only partly. This secrecy had a twofold object. First, when I still hoped to be able to turn the Regent from his path, I wished, *if* successful, not to compromise him. The *Patteh*, on his behalf, on the 12th instant, thanked me expressly for my discretion. But afterwards, when I began to despair of the success of my efforts, or rather, when the measure of my indignation ran over *owing to an occurrence just heard of*, when further silence would have become *complicity*, then this secrecy had to be observed on *my own* account, for to myself also, and those belonging to me, I have duties to fulfil.

“Should I not, after my letter of yesterday, if its contents were idle, baseless, or a figment of the imagination, be unworthy to serve the Government? And should, or shall, I be able to prove

that I have done ‘*what a good Assistant-Resident should do,*’ prove that I am equal to the position given to me, prove that I do not thoughtlessly and rashly stake seventeen difficult years of service, and, what is more, the interest of wife and child . . . shall I be able to *prove* all this, if not a profound secrecy conceals my investigations, and prevents the guilty one from *covering* himself, as it is called?

“On the slightest suspicion the Regent will send an urgent message to his nephew, who is on the way to him, and who is interested in backing him up. He will ask for money at any price, distribute it with a liberal hand to all those whom of late he has done out of their belongings, and the result may be — I trust it should not be necessary to say *will* be — the opinion that *I* have passed a rash judgment, and, briefly, that I am an unpractical officer, not to say worse.

“It is in order to secure myself against this eventuality that I am writing this letter. I have the highest respect for you, but I know the spirit which may be called ‘the spirit of East-Indian officials,’ and I am *not* possessed of that spirit!

“Your hint that it would have been better had the case first been treated *privately*, makes me fear a conference. What I said in yesterday’s letter is *true*. But it might *appear* untrue if the case were treated in a manner that might tend to revealment of my charge and my suspicion *before the Regent shall have been removed from here*.

“I may not conceal from you that even your unexpected arrival, in connection with the urgent message I sent to *Serang* yesterday, makes me fear that the guilty one, who has hitherto refused to yield to my admonitions, will *now* wake up *before* the right time, and will try, if possible, *tant soit peu* to exculpate himself.

“I have the honour, for the present, still to conform literally to my letter of yesterday; but I take the liberty at the same time to remark that that letter *also* contained the proposal: *to remove the Regent before the inquiry, and provisionally to render his adher-*

ents powerless. I hold that I am responsible for the contentions I advanced only in so far as it may please you to agree to my proposal concerning the *manner* of the inquiry, i.e.: impartial, open, and above all, *free*.

"This free character does *not* exist until the Regent shall have been removed, and in my modest opinion there is nothing dangerous in his removal. Can he not be told that it is *I* who charge and suspect, that it is *I*, and not *he*, who incur risk if he is proved innocent? For I myself am of the opinion that, if it should be shown that I have acted rashly, or only precipitately even, I ought to be dismissed from the service.

"Precipitate! After *years, years* of abuse!

"Precipitate! As though an honest man would be able to sleep, to live, to enjoy, as long as they over whose well-being he is called to watch, they who in the highest sense are his *nearest*, are continually robbed and exploited!

"It is true, I have only been here a short time, but I trust that some day the question will be *what* one has done, and whether one has done it *well*, not whether one has done it in *too short a time*.

"To me every period of time is too long when it is marked by extortion and oppression, and to me every second would weigh heavy which, owing to *my* neglect, to *my* dereliction of duty, to *my* spirit of compromise, would have been spent in misery by others.

"I even now regret the days I have allowed to pass without reporting officially, and I ask to be pardoned for that neglect.

"I take the liberty to request that I may be given the opportunity of justifying this letter, and protected against the failure of my efforts to free the division of *Lebak* from the worms that since the memory of man have gnawed at its welfare.

"It is for this reason that I again presume to ask you kindly to approve my actions in this matter — which, to be sure, have only consisted in *inquiry, report* and *recommendation* — that you will remove the Regent of *Lebak* from here without previous *direct* or

indirect warning, and that further you will order an inquiry to be held as to the facts I communicated to you in my letter of yesterday, No. 88.

“*The Assistant-Resident of Lebak,*
“MAX HAVELAAR.”

This request *not to afford protection to the guilty* was received by the Resident on the way. An hour after his arrival at *Rangkas-Betoong* he paid a short visit to the Regent, and asked him on this occasion what he could allege against the Assistant-Resident, and whether *he*, the *Adhipatti*, was in want of money! To the first question the Regent replied: “Nothing, I swear!” To the second question he replied in the affirmative, whereupon the Resident gave him a couple of banknotes which he — having brought them for the purpose! — took out of his waistcoat pocket. It will be understood that all this happened unknown to Havelaar, and presently we shall be shown how he became aware of this disgraceful action.

When Resident Slimering alighted at Havelaar’s house, he was paler than usual, and his words were farther than ever parted from one another. And indeed it was no trifling ordeal for one who so greatly excelled in “manœuvring” and in annual peace-reports, to have suddenly to receive letters in which there was not a trace, either of the customary official optimism, or of artistic twisting of the matter, or of the fear of making the Government dissatisfied by being “embarrassed” by unfavourable tidings. The Resident of *Bantam* had had a fright, and if I may be pardoned the ignobility of the figure of speech for the sake of exactness, I am inclined to compare him to a street-arab who complains of the violation of pre-ancestral customs, because an eccentric companion has hit him without preliminary invectives.

He began by asking the Controller why he had not tried to turn Havelaar from making his charge. Poor Verbrugge, who knew nothing whatever about the charge, protested to that effect, but found no credence. Mr. Slimering could not at all understand that

anyone, all by himself, on his own responsibility, and without long-drawn deliberations or "consultations," had been able to proceed to such unheard-of performance of his duty. As, however, Verbrugge, in strict accordance with the truth, maintained his ignorance of the letters written by Havelaar, the Resident, after many exclamations of almost unbelieving amazement, was at last compelled to accept his statement, and he next, I don't know why, started to read those letters.

What Verbrugge suffered in listening to this would be difficult to describe. He was an honest man, and would certainly not have told a lie if Havelaar had appealed to him for confirmation of the truth of the contents of those letters. But even without this proof of honesty, in many written reports he had not always been able to avoid speaking the truth, often when such truth was dangerous. What would happen if Havelaar were to make use of these reports?

After reading the letters the Resident stated that it would please him if Havelaar would take back these documents, so that they might be considered as not written. This proposal was declined with courteous firmness. After some vain efforts to persuade Havelaar, the Resident said that nothing was left for him but to institute an inquiry into the truth of the complaints made, and that therefore he must request Havelaar to have the witnesses called who could substantiate his charges.

Poor people who had torn your flesh at the thorn-bushes in the ravine, how anxiously would your hearts have beaten if you could have heard this demand!

Poor Verbrugge! You, first witness, chief witness, witness *ex officio*, witness by virtue of office and oath! Witness who had already borne witness in writing! In writing that lay there, on the table, under Havelaar's hand. . . .

Havelaar answered:

"Resident, *I* am the Assistant-Resident of *Lebak*, *I* have promised to protect the population from extortion and violence, *I* accuse the Regent, and his son-in-law of *Parang Koodyang*; *I* shall prove

the truth of my charge as soon as the opportunity is given me which I proposed in my letters; if my charge is false, it is *I* who am guilty of slander!"

How freely Verbrugge breathed!

And how strange the Resident thought Havelaar's words!

The interview lasted a long time. With great courteousness — for Mr. Slimering was courteous and well-bred — the Resident sought to persuade Havelaar to relinquish such mistaken principles. But with equal courteousness the latter remained immovable. The end was that the Resident had to yield, and said by way of a threat, which to Havelaar was a triumph: *that he would then be compelled to bring the letters in question under the notice of the Government.*

The conference was closed. The Resident visited the *Adhipatti* — we have already seen what business he had there! — and next sat down to dinner at the scanty meal of the Havelaars. After this he returned at once to *Serang*, with great despatch: Because. He. Was. So. Exceptionally. Busy.

The next day, Havelaar received a letter from the Resident of *Bantam*, the contents of which may be inferred from Havelaar's answer, which I here copy:

"No. 93.

"Rangkas-Betoong, 28th February, 1856.

"I have the honour to acknowledge your urgent missive of the 26th instant, *confidential*, containing principally the following communication:

"That you have reasons not to assent to the proposals made in my official letters of the 24th and 25th instant, Nos. 88 and 91;

"That you would have preferred a previous confidential communication;

"That you do not approve of my action as described in those two letters;

"And finally some instructions.

"I now have the honour to assure you once more, as I did orally at our conference the day before yesterday:

"That I entirely respect your legal authority as regards your assent or non-assent to my proposals;

"That your instructions will be carried out strictly and if needs be with self-denial, as though you were present at all I do or say, or rather do not do or say.

"I know that in this you will trust to my loyalty.

"But I take the liberty to protest most solemnly against the slightest vestige of disapproval with regard to *any* action, *any* word, *any* phrase, which in this matter I have done, spoken, or written.

"I have the conviction that I have done my *duty*, in intention and in manner of execution, *my whole duty, nothing but my duty*, without the slightest deviation.

"I reflected a long time before I acted — i.e.: before I *investigated, reported and proposed* — and if I should have erred at all in anything . . . I did not err from precipitateness.

"In similar circumstances I should again do and omit — though with a little less delay — entirely and literally the same.

"And even if a more exalted authority than yours disapproved anything in what I did — excepting perhaps the idiosyncrasy of my style, which is part of myself, a fault I am as little responsible for as a stammerer is for his — if it were that . . . but this, no, this *cannot* be; yet if it were so: *I have done my duty*.

"It certainly grieves me — though without astonishment — that you have a different opinion on this — and if only my person were concerned I should resign myself to what appears to me a misjudgment — but a *principle* is at stake, and I have reasons of conscience which demand that it be settled whose opinion is correct, *yours or mine*.

"I cannot serve otherwise than I did at *Lebak*. If then the Government wishes to be served differently, then honesty compels me to beg respectfully to be relieved of my duties. Then, at thirty-

six years of age, I must try to begin a new career. Then, after seventeen years, after seventeen *heavy* and *difficult* years of service, after having devoted my life's best powers to that which I held to be my duty, I shall again have to ask Society whether it will give me bread for wife and child, bread in exchange for my thoughts, bread maybe in exchange for labour with a wheelbarrow and a spade, if the strength of my arm should be judged of greater value than the strength of my soul.

"But I cannot and will not believe that your opinion is shared by His Excellency the Governor-General, and I am obliged, therefore, ere I am driven to the bitter extreme I described in the last paragraph, to request respectfully that you will be good enough to recommend to the Government:

"To instruct the Resident of Bantam to approve the actions of the Assistant-Resident of Lebak, relative to the latter's missives of the 24th and 25th instant, Nos. 88 and 91; or otherwise: —

"To call upon the aforesaid Assistant-Resident to answer the points of disapproval formulated by the Resident of Bantam.

"In conclusion I have the honour to give you the grateful assurance that if *anything* could have moved me to go back upon my principles concerned in this matter, long reflected upon and calmly but ardently adhered to though they are . . . it would indeed have been the courteous and persuasive manner in which at our conference the day before yesterday you combated those principles.

"The Assistant-Resident of Lebak,

"MAX HAVELAAR."

Without pronouncing a verdict with regard to the truth of the Widow Slotering's suspicion about the cause of her children's having become orphans, and accepting only what is provable, namely that at *Lebak* there was a close connection between the fulfilment of duty and . . . poison, even if this connection only existed in people's opinions, yet everyone will understand that Max and Tine

passed anxious days after the Resident's visit. I believe it is unnecessary to sketch the torturing fear of a mother who, in giving food to her child, has continually to put to herself the question whether perhaps she is murdering her darling. And truly he was a "prayed-for" child, little Max, who had tarried in coming for seven years after the marriage, as though the rogue knew that it was not exactly an advantage to come into the world as the son of such parents!

Twenty-nine long days Havelaar had to wait before the Governor-General informed him . . . but we are not yet so far.

Shortly after the vain efforts to persuade Havelaar to take back his letters, or to betray the poor people who had trusted in his magnanimity, Verbrugge one day came into his room. The good man was deadly pale, and found it difficult to speak.

"I have been to see the Regent," he said . . . "this is infamous . . . but do not betray me."

"What? *What* is it I am not to betray?"

"Will you give me your word that you won't use what I shall say to you?"

"Again halfness," said Havelaar. "But . . . very well! I give my word."

And then Verbrugge stated what is already known to the reader, that the Resident had asked the *Adhipatti* whether he had any complaints to make against the Assistant-Resident, and had also quite unexpectedly offered and given him money. Verbrugge had it from the Regent himself, who asked him what reasons could have moved the Resident to this action. Havelaar was indignant, but . . . he had given his word.

The next day Verbrugge returned, and said that Duclari had pointed out to him how ignoble it was to leave Havelaar, who had to fight *such* opponents, so entirely alone, and Verbrugge therefore came to release him of his word.

"Very well," Havelaar exclaimed, "write it down!"

Verbrugge wrote it down. This declaration also lies before me.

The reader must long have seen why I can so readily relinquish all claims to juridical authenticity for the story of *Saïdyah*.

It was a striking thing to observe how the timid Verbrugge, before the reproaches of Duclari, durst rely on Havelaar's word in a case which tempted so strongly to breach of faith!

And another thing. Since the events which I am relating, years have elapsed. Havelaar has suffered much in that time, he has seen his family suffer — the writings that lie before me bear witness to it! — and it appears that he has waited. . . . I here give the following note from his hand:

"I have seen in the newspapers that Mr. Slimering has been made a Knight of the Netherlands Lion. He now appears to be Resident of Djokjakarta. I could not therefore now revert to the Lebak affairs without danger to Verbrugge."



CHAPTER XX

It was evening. Tine sat reading in the inner colonnade, and Havelaar was designing an embroidery-pattern. Little Max was conjuring a block-picture together, and got into a pet because he could not find "the red body of that woman."

"Do you think it would be all right like this, Tine?" asked Havelaar. "Look, I have made this palm-tree a trifle longer . . . this is exactly Hogarth's 'line of beauty,' don't you think?"

"Yes, Max, but the lace-holes are too close together."

"Oh? And then those other borders? Max, just let me see your pants! Halloa! are you wearing *that* border? Why, Tine, I still remember where you worked that!"

"I don't! Where was it?"

"At The Hague, when Max was ill, and we had been so frightened by the Doctor saying that he had such an unusual head-formation, and that we should have to take the greatest care to prevent undue pressure on the brain. It was exactly at that time that you were embroidering that border."

Tine got up and kissed the boy.

"I *have* got her stomach, I *have* got her stomach!" the child exclaimed hilariously, and the red woman was complete.

"Who can hear them beating the tomtom?"¹ asked his mother.

"I," said little Max.

"And what does it mean?"

"Bedtime! But . . . I haven't had anything to eat yet."

"You shall eat first, of course."

And she got up, and gave him his simple meal, which she ap-

¹ The hour-block.

peared to get out of a well-closed cupboard in her room, for the clicking of several locks was heard.

"What are you giving him?" asked Havelaar.

"Oh, make your mind easy, Max: it's a biscuit out of a tin from *Batavia*! And the sugar also has always been under lock and key."

Havelaar's thoughts returned to the point where they had been interrupted.

"Do you know," he continued, "that we haven't yet paid the Doctor's bill? . . . Oh, it is very hard!"

"My dear Max, we are living so economically here, we shall soon be able to pay everything! Besides, you'll no doubt soon be made a Resident, and then everything will be settled in a very short time."

"That's exactly the thing that makes me sad," said Havelaar. "I should be so very sorry to leave *Lebak* . . . I'll explain. Don't you think we loved our Max even more after his illness? Well, it's just in the same way that I shall love this poor place *Lebak* when the cancer has been cured from which it has suffered so many years. The thought of promotion dismays me, for I can't be spared here, Tine! And yet, on the other hand, when I think of our debts . . ."

"It will all come right, Max! Even if now you had to go away from here, you could help *Lebak* later, when you are Governor-General."

At this there showed savage streaks in Havelaar's embroidery-pattern! There was anger in that florescence, those lace-holes became angular, pointed, they bit each other . . .

Tine saw that she had said something amiss.

"Darling Max . . ." she began gently.

"Curse it! Do you want to let those poor wretches hunger so long? Can you live on *sand*?"

"Darling Max!"

But he jumped up. There was no more drawing that evening.

He strode up and down angrily in the inner colonnade, and at last he said in a tone that to any stranger would have sounded rough and harsh, but was very differently understood by Tine:

"Damn this laxness, this shameful laxness! Here I have sat down waiting for justice a whole month, and meanwhile those poor people suffer terribly. The Regent seems to be confident that no one dares tackle him! Look . . ."

He went into his office, and returned with a letter in his hand, a letter which lies before me, reader!

"Look! in this letter he has the audacity to make proposals to me as to the *kind* of labour he will have performed by the people whom he has called up unlawfully. Isn't this carrying impudence *too* far? And do you know who those people are? They are women with little children, babies, pregnant women who have been driven from *Parang Koodyang* to the head-centre in order to labour for *him*! There are no more men! And they have nothing to eat, and they sleep in the road, and eat sand! Can *you* eat sand? Must they eat sand until I am Governor-General? Curse it!"

Tine knew very well with whom Max was in reality angry, when he spoke like this to her, whom he loved so deeply.

"And," continued Havelaar, "for all this the responsibility falls on me! If at this very moment some of these poor creatures are wandering about outside there . . . if they see the gleam of our lamp, they will say: 'There dwells the wretch who was to protect us! There he sits peacefully, with wife and child, and designs embroidery-patterns, and we lie here in the road with our children, starving like dogs of the forest!' Yes, I hear it, I hear it, this cry for vengeance upon my head! Here, Max, here!"

And he kissed his child with a wildness that frightened the little one.

"My child, when they say to you that I am a wretch who had not the courage to do justice . . . that so many mothers died through my fault . . . when they say to you that your father's

neglect of duty stole the blessing from your head, O, Max, O, Max, bear witness to what I suffered!"

And he burst into tears, which Tine kissed away. She then took little Max to his bed, his mat of straw, and when she returned she found Havelaar in conversation with Verbrugge and Duclari, who had just come in. The conversation ran on the expected decision of the Government.

"I can quite well understand that the Resident is in a difficult predicament," said Duclari. "He cannot advise the Government to carry out your proposals, for then *too much* would come to light. I have been in *Bantam* a long time, and know a good deal about it, more even than you, Mr. Havelaar! I was already in this neighbourhood when I was a subaltern, and in that position one comes to know things that the native dares not say to the officials. But if after a public inquiry all this should come to light, the Governor-General would call upon the Resident for an explanation, and ask him how it is that in two years he did not discover what was at once obvious to you. He must therefore seek to prevent such inquiry. . . ."

"I have realized this," answered Havelaar, "and, awakened by his effort to induce the *Adhipatti* to make allegations against me, which seems to indicate that he will try to side-track the question, by, for instance, accusing *me* of . . . I don't know what, I have covered myself by sending copies direct to the Government. One of them contains the request to be called upon for an explanation, in case, perhaps, a pretence should be made that *I* had done something wrong. Now if the Resident attacks *me*, then in common justice no decision can be arrived at without first hearing me. One owes this even to a criminal, and as I have done nothing wrong . . ."

"There comes the post!" exclaimed Verbrugge.

Yes, it was the post! The post, which brought the following letter from the Governor-General to the *ex*-Assistant-Resident of *Lebak*, Havelaar.

"Ex. Co.

"*Buitenzorg*, 23rd March, 1856.

"No. 54.

"The manner in which you have proceeded since the discovery or supposition of malpractices on the part of the Chiefs of the Division of *Lebak*, and the attitude taken up by you on that occasion towards your superior officer, the Resident of *Bantam*, have incurred my greatest dissatisfaction.

"In your actions, above referred to, there has been an absence equally of moderate deliberation, tact, and prudence, which are so urgently requisite in an officer clothed [*sic*] with the execution of authority in the interior, as of a proper conception of subordination to your immediate superior.

"It was only a few days after you had entered upon your new duties that you found good, without previous consultation of [*sic*] the Resident, to make the Chief of the Native Government of *Lebak* an object of incriminating inquiries.

"In those inquiries you found cause without even substantiating your charges against that Chief by facts, and far less by proofs, to recommend measures which tended to subject a Native Officer of the stamp of the Regent of *Lebak*, a sixty-year-old but still zealous servant of his Country, related to neighbouring important Regent-families, and about whom there have always been received favourable reports, to a treatment which would have entirely ruined him from a moral point of view.

"Moreover, when the Resident showed himself indisposed to give immediate effect to your proposals, you refused to comply with the reasonable demand of your Chief to make a complete disclosure of the things that were known to you relative to the actions of the Native administration at *Lebak*.

"Such actions deserve complete disapprobation, and would readily give cause to suspect *unfitness* for the occupation of a position with the Internal Administration.

"I am therefore compelled to relieve you of the further fulfilment of your duties as Assistant-Resident of *Lebak*.

"In view, however, of former favourable reports received about you, I have not wished to find a reason in what has occurred to deprive you of the prospect of another appointment with the Internal Administration. I have, therefore, provisionally charged you with the performance of the function of Assistant-Resident at *Ngawi*.

"On your future actions in that position it will wholly depend whether it will be possible for you to remain employed with the Internal Administration."

And below this was written the name of the man on whose "*zeal, ability, and loyalty*" the King said he was able to rely, when signing his appointment as Governor-General of Netherlands India.

"We are leaving here, dearest Tine," said Havelaar resignedly, and he handed the missive from Cabinet to Verbrugge, who read the document together with Duclari.

Verbrugge had tears in his eyes, but said nothing. Duclari, a particularly refined man, burst out in a savage oath:

"God damn! I have seen scoundrels and thieves in the Government here . . . they have left with full honours, and to *You* a letter like this is written!"

"It is nothing," said Havelaar; "the Governor-General is an honest man: he must have been deceived . . . although he could have guarded against this deceit by hearing me first. He has been caught in the web of *Buitenzorg* officialdom. We know that kind of thing! But I will go to him and show him how matters stand here. He will do justice, I am certain!"

"But if you go to *Ngawi* . . ."

"Exactly, I know! At *Ngawi* the Regent is related to the Court of *Djokja*. I know *Ngawi*, for I was two years at *Baglen*, which is in the vicinity. I should be compelled at *Ngawi* to do exactly

the same thing as here: that would be useless travelling to and fro. Besides, it is impossible for me to serve on probation, as though I had misconducted myself! And finally, I see that, in order to put a stop to all this intriguing, I must cease to be an official. As an official I find between myself and the Government too many persons who are interested in denying the misery of the population. There are, in addition, still further reasons that prevent me from going to *Ngawi*. The place was not vacant . . . it has been purposely made vacant for me: look!"

And he showed in the *Java Gazette*, received by the same mail, the fact that in the one Government Order in Council the Administration of *Ngawi* was entrusted to him, and the Assistant-Resident of that province was transferred to another division that was vacant.

"Do you know why it is exactly *Ngawi* where they want me to go, and not the division that was vacant? I'll tell you! The Resident of *Madioon*, to which *Ngawi* belongs, is the *brother-in-law* of the former Resident of Bantam. I have mentioned that the Regent formerly had such bad examples . . ."

"Ah!" exclaimed Verbrugge and Duclari at the same time. They understood why Havelaar was particularly transferred to *Ngawi* on probation, to see whether he would improve!

"And there is still another reason why I cannot go there," he said. "The present Governor-General will soon retire. . . . I know his successor, and I know that nothing may be expected of him. Therefore in order to do anything for these poor people in time, I must see the present Governor-General before his departure, and if now I were to go to *Ngawi*, that would be impossible. Tine, listen!"

"Dear Max?"

"You have plenty of courage, haven't you?"

"Max, you know that I have courage . . . when I am with you!"

"Very well!"

He rose and wrote the following request, in my opinion an example of eloquence:

“*Rangkas-Betoong*, 29th March, 1856.

“To the Governor-General of Netherlands India.

“I have had the honour to receive Your Excellency’s Cabinet-missive of the 23rd instant, No. 54.

“I find myself compelled, in answer to that document, to ask your Excellency to give me my honourable discharge from the service of the State.

“MAX HAVELAAR.”

Not so long a time was required at *Buitenzorg* to give the discharge applied for as appeared to have been necessary for the decision as to how one might divert Havelaar’s accusation.

“Thank God!” exclaimed Tine, “that at last you may be yourself!”

Havelaar received no instructions provisionally to hand over the administration of his division to Verbrugge, and thought therefore that he should await his successor. That officer was a long time in arriving, as he had to come from an entirely different part of *Java*. After waiting nearly three weeks, the ex-Assistant-Resident of *Lebak*, who, however, had all the time still functioned as though in office, wrote the following letter to Controller Verbrugge:

“No. 153.

“*Rangkas-Betoong*, 15th April, 1856.

“To the Controller of *Lebak*.

“You are aware that by Government-decree of the 4th instant, No. 4, I have, at my own request, been honourably discharged from the service of the State.

“I might have been at once justified, on receipt of that decision, in giving up my duties as Assistant-Resident, as it appears an anomaly to fulfil a function without being an official.

"I did not, however, receive any instructions to surrender my charge, and, partly from a realization of the obligation not to leave my post without having been duly relieved, partly from causes of subordinate importance, I awaited the arrival of my successor, as I imagined that this officer would be here soon — at least during this month.

"I have just learnt from you that my substitute cannot be expected quite so soon — you heard this, I believe, at *Serang* — and also that the Resident is astonished that, in the very peculiar position in which I find myself, I have not yet asked to be allowed to place the administration in your hands.

"Nothing could please me more than this news. For I need not assure you that I, who have declared that I could not serve otherwise than as I did here . . . I, who for this manner of serving have been punished with censure and a ruinous and dishonouring transfer . . . also with the command to betray the poor people who trusted in my loyalty — with the choice therefore between dishonour and destitution: that after all this I had to test with pains and care every case that presented itself, having constant regard to my duty, and that even the simplest matter was trying to *me*, placed as I was between my conscience and the principles of the Government to which I owed loyalty as long as I was not relieved of my office.

"My difficulty became especially apparent whenever I had to give an answer to a *complainant*.

"For at one time I had promised not to give up anyone to the rancour of his Chiefs! — At one time I had — with considerable imprudence! — pledged my word for the justice of the Government.

"The poor people could not know that this promise and this pledge had been disavowed, and that I stood alone, poor and powerless, with my desire for justice and humanity.

"And all the time the complaints continued!

"It was intensely painful, after the receipt of Cabinet's missive

of 23rd March, to sit there as a supposed haven of refuge, and yet to be an impotent protector.

"It was heartrending to listen to the complaints about ill-treatment, extortion, poverty, starvation . . . when now even I myself was going to face, with wife and child, both hunger and poverty.

"And yet even then I was not at liberty to betray the Government. I was not at liberty to say to those poor people: 'Go and suffer still, for the Administration *wishes* you to be exploited!' I was not at liberty to confess my impotence, linked as I was to the disgrace and unscrupulousness of the advisers of the Governor-General.

"This is what I answered:

"*'I cannot help you immediately! But I shall go to Batavia, and I shall speak to the Great Lord about your misery. HE is just, and HE will stand by you. For the present go home peacefully . . . do not resist . . . do not yet leave the place . . . wait patiently: I think, I . . . hope that justice will be done!'*

"So I thought, ashamed of the breach of my pledge of assistance, that I might make my ideas harmonize with my duty towards the Administration, *as it still pays me this month*, and I should have continued this until the arrival of my successor, if an unusual occurrence to-day had not necessitated my putting a stop to this equivocal relation.

"Seven persons had complained. I gave them the above reply. They returned to their homes. On the way they met their village-chief. He must have forbidden them to leave their *kampong* again, and — as it has been reported to me — taken their clothes away from them to compel them to stay at home. One of them escaped, came to me *again*, and declared *that he durst not return to his village*.

"I absolutely do not know what I am to say to *that* man!

"I *cannot* protect him . . . I *may* not confess my impotence to

him . . . I *will* not prosecute the village-chief who has been accused of the above action, as this would have the appearance that I had raked up this case *pour le besoin de ma cause*: I know no longer what to do. . . .

"I charge you, pending further approval of the Resident of *Bantam*, from to-morrow with the administration of the Division of *Lebak*.

"*The Assistant-Resident of Lebak,*

"MAX HAVELAAR."

After this Havelaar left *Rangkas-Betoong* with his wife and child. He declined any escort. Duclari and Verbrugge were deeply moved when bidding them farewell. Even Havelaar was touched when at the first relay he saw a numerous crowd of people who had stolen away from *Rangkas-Betoong* to salute him for the last time.

At *Serang* the family alighted at Mr. Slimering's residence, and were received with the accustomed Indian hospitality.

That night there were many visitors at the Resident's house. They said as significantly as possible that they had come *to meet Havelaar*, and Max received many an eloquent handshake. . . .

But he had to go to *Batavia* to see the Governor-General. . . .

On his arrival there, he applied for an audience. This was denied him, as His Excellency was suffering from a whitlow on his foot.

Havelaar waited until that whitlow was better. Then he again applied for an audience.

His Excellency *was so busy that he had even been compelled to refuse an audience to the Director-General of Finance*, and consequently he could not receive Havelaar either.

Havelaar waited until His Excellency should have struggled through all his pressure of work. Meanwhile he felt something like jealousy of the persons who assisted His Excellency in his labours. For he loved to work much and rapidly, and as a rule

those "pressures" would melt away under his hand. But of this, of course, there could now be no question. Havelaar's labour was harder than labour: he *waited*!

He waited. At last he sent in another request for an audience. He was answered *that His Excellency could not receive him because he was entirely occupied with the preparations for his approaching departure.*

Max recommended himself to the favourable consideration of His Excellency for half an hour's audience, as soon as there should be a small space of time between two "pressures."

At last he learnt that His Excellency was to depart next day! This was a thunderbolt to him.

Still ever he held on with convulsive desperation to the belief that the retiring Governor-General was an honest man, and . . . had been deceived. A quarter of an hour would have been sufficient to prove the justice of his cause, and it seemed that this quarter of an hour was going to be refused him.

I find among Havelaar's papers the draft of a letter he seems to have written the retiring Governor-General the last night before that high official's departure for the mother-country. In the margin there is a pencil note: "not exact," from which I conclude that in copying out the letter he must have altered some phrases. I draw attention to this, so that, from an absence of *literal* agreement of *this* document with the letter, a doubt may not arise of the authenticity of the other *official* papers of which I stated the contents, all of which are signed by a strange hand as *certified copies*. Perhaps the man to whom this letter was addressed may wish to publish the *entirely* exact text. One might then see by comparison to what extent Havelaar had deviated from his draft. In *essence* correct, the context was as follows:

"Batavia, 23rd May, 1856.

"Excellency! My request made by official application of the 28th February, for an audience in connection with the affairs of *Lebak*, has been without result.

"Your Excellency has also not been pleased to comply with my repeated subsequent requests for an audience.

"Your Excellency therefore has placed an official *who was favourably known to the Government* (these are Your Excellency's own words!), one who for seventeen years served the State in these colonies, one who not only had done no wrong, but who had even with unprecedented self-denial aimed at doing right and was ready to stake everything for honour and duty . . . such an one Your Excellency has placed below criminals. For to criminals one gives at least a *hearing*.

"That Your Excellency has been misled with regard to me, is a thing I can understand. But I do not understand why Your Excellency should have refused to take the opportunity of escaping from such misguidance.

"To-morrow Your Excellency departs from here, and I may not let you leave without once more having said *that I have done my DUTY, ENTIRELY MY DUTY, with discretion, with restraint, with humaneness, with gentleness and with courage*.

"The reasons on which the disapprobation expressed in Your Excellency's Cabinet-massive of 23rd March is based are *entirely fictitious and mendacious*.

"This I can *prove*, and I should already have done so if Your Excellency had been pleased to grant me half an hour's audience. If Your Excellency had been able to spare one half hour *to do justice!*

"This has not been the case. A respectable family has thereby been reduced to poverty. . . .

"About this, however, I do not complain.

"But Your Excellency has *sanctioned*: THE SYSTEM OF ABUSE OF AUTHORITY, OF THEFT AND MURDER, UNDER WHICH THE POOR JAVANESE ARE CRUSHED, and it is *this* of which I complain.

"*This* cries to heaven!

"There is blood on the money saved from your Indian salary *thus* received, Excellency!

"Once more I ask for a moment's audience, be it this night or be it early to-morrow morning! And still again I do not ask this for myself, but for the cause I advocate, the cause of justice and humanity, which is at the same time the cause of a well-considered policy.

"If Your Excellency's conscience is at ease about leaving here without hearing me, mine will be clear through the conviction that I have done everything possible to prevent the sad and bloody events that will soon be the consequence of the self-willed ignorance in which the Government is left concerning the things that happen among the population.

"MAX HAVELAAR."

Havelaar waited that evening. He waited the whole night.

He had hoped that perhaps anger at the tone of his letter would bring about what he had vainly tried to attain by gentleness and patience. His hope was in vain. The Governor-General departed without having heard Havelaar. Another Excellency had retired to rest in the motherland!

Havelaar wandered about, poor and forsaken. He sought . . .

Enough, estimable Stern! I, Multatuli, take up the pen. You are not called upon to write Havelaar's life-history. I have called you into being . . . I made you come from Hamburg . . . I taught you to write fairly good Dutch, in a very short time . . . I made you kiss Louise Rosemeyer, who is "in" sugar . . . it is enough, Stern, you can go!

"That Shawlman and his wife . . ."

Halt! miserable product of sordid covetousness and blasphemous hypocrisy! I created you . . . you grew under my pen to a monster . . . I loathe my own creation: choke in coffee and vanish!

Yes, I, Multatuli, "who have borne much," take up the pen. I make no apology for the form of my book. That form appeared to me suitable for the attainment of my object.

That object is twofold:

In the first place I wished to give existence to a thing that may be kept as a sacred heirloom by little Max and his sister, when their parents shall have perished from want.

I wished to give those children a patent of nobility from my own hand.

And in the second place: *I will* be read.

Yes, *I will* be read! *I will* be read by statesmen who are obliged to watch the signs of the time . . . by *literati* who "also just want to have a look" at the book of which everyone says such unpleasant things . . . by traders who are interested in coffee-sales . . . by ladies' maids who will hire me for a couple of pence . . . by Governor-Generals in peaceful retirement . . . by Ministers in occupation . . . by the lackeys of these "Excellencies" . . . by praying parsons who will say *more majorum* that I attack the Almighty God, where I only rise against the little deity that *they* made after their own image . . . by thousands and ten thousands of samples of the race of Drystubbe, who—continuing to promote their little businesses in the well-known manner—will be the loudest to shriek with others about the "prettiness" of my writings . . . by the members of the Houses of Representatives, who have to know what is going on in the great Empire beyond the sea, which belongs to the Realm of the Netherlands.

Yes, *I shall* be read!

When this object is attained, I shall be satisfied. For it was not my desire to write *well* . . . I wanted to write in such a way as to be heard. And like one who cries: "Stop thief!" and who troubles little about the style of his improvised address to the public, so also I am quite indifferent as to the manner in which people will consider that I have yelled *my* "Stop thief!"

"The book is a patchwork . . . there is no gradual develop-

ment in it . . . striving after effect . . . the style is bad . . . the writer is inexperienced . . . no talent . . . no method . . .”

Right, right, all right! But . . . THE JAVANESE ARE MALTREATED!

For: *disproof of the MAIN TENDENCY of my work is impossible!*

For the remainder, the louder the disapproval of my book, the better I shall like it, for so much the greater will be the chance of *being heard*. And that is what I *wish*!

But you, whom I disturb in your “pressures” of occupations, or in your peaceful “retirement,” you Ministers and Governor-Generals, do not depend too greatly on the inexperience of my pen. It might gain practice, and with a little exertion it might perhaps attain to an efficiency which in the end would cause the truth to be believed even by the People! Then I should ask that People for a place in its Representation, were it only for the purpose of protesting against certificates of integrity that Indian Specialists mutually present to each other, perhaps to suggest the extraordinary idea that they themselves attach value to that quality . . .

In order to protest against the endless expeditions and acts of heroism against poor miserable creatures who have first been forced to rebellion by maltreatment.

In order to protest against the shameful cowardice of circulars that besmirch the honour of the Nation by invoking *public charity* for the VICTIMS of *chronic piracy*.

It is true, those rebels were starved skeletons, and those pirates are able-bodied men!

And if that place were refused me . . . if people persisted in *not believing me* . . .

Then I should translate my book into the few languages that I know and into the many languages that I can still learn, so that I might ask from Europe what I had in vain sought in the Netherlands.

And in all the Capitals songs would be sung with refrains like

this: *a pirate state lies on the sea, between the Scheldt and Eastern Friesland!*

And if even this did not avail?

Then I should translate my book into *Malay, Javanese, Soondah, Alfoor, Booghinese, Battah . . .*

And I should hurl *klewang*-whetting warsongs into the hearts of the poor martyrs to whom I have promised help, I, Multatuli.

Deliverance and help, by legal means if *possible . . .* by lawful means of force if *necessary*.

And *this would react most disadvantageously on the COFFEE-SALES OF THE DUTCH TRADING COMPANY.*

For I am no fly-rescuing poet, no gentle-hearted dreamer, as was down-trodden Havelaar, who did his duty with the courage of a lion, and who starves with the patience of a marmot in winter.

This book is an introduction . . .

I shall increase in power and keenness of weapons, in proportion as it shall be needed . . .

God grant that it may not be needed!

No! it *will* not be needed! For to *You* I dedicate my book, William the Third, King, Grand Duke, Prince . . . more than Prince, Grand Duke and King . . . EMPEROR of the glorious realm of INSULIND, that winds yonder round the equator like a girdle of emerald . . .

From *You* I dare ask with confidence whether it is your imperial will:

That Havelaar is splashed with the mud of *Slimerings* and *Drystubbles*.

And that yonder *Your* more than *thirty million* subjects are MALTREATED AND EXPLOITED IN *YOUR NAME!*

A NOTE ON THE TYPE IN
WHICH THIS BOOK IS SET

The type in which this book has been set (on the Linotype) is based on the design of Caslon. It is generally conceded that William Caslon (1692-1766) brought the old-style letter to its highest perfection and while certain modifications have been introduced to meet changing printing conditions, the basic design of the Caslon letters has never been improved. The type selected for this book is a modern adaptation rather than an exact copy of the original Caslon. The principal difference to be noted is a slight shortening of the ascending and descending letters to accommodate a larger face on a given body-size.



SET UP, ELECTROTYPED, PRINTED
AND BOUND BY THE PLIMPTON
PRESS, NORWOOD, MASS. • PAPER
MANUFACTURED BY S. D.
WARREN & CO., BOSTON,
MASS., AND FURNISHED
BY HENRY LINDEN-
MEYER & SONS,
NEW YORK





